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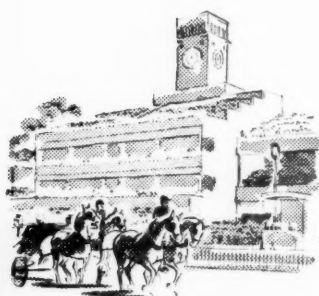
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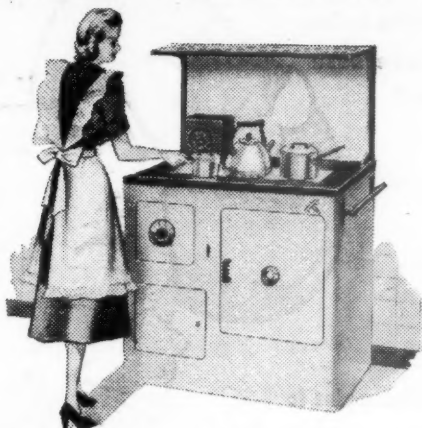
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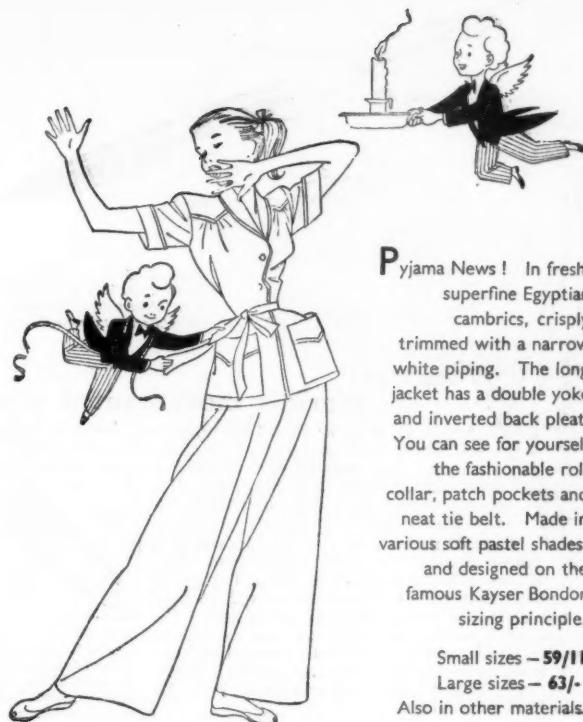


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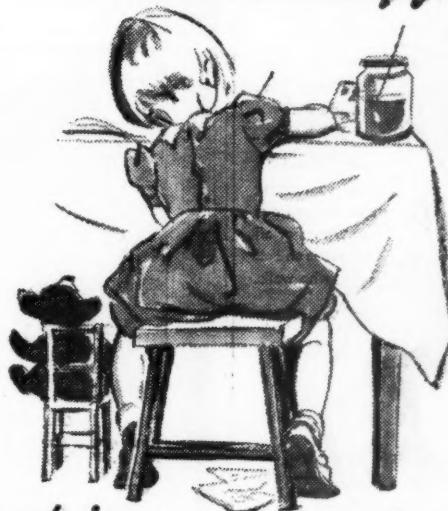
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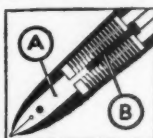
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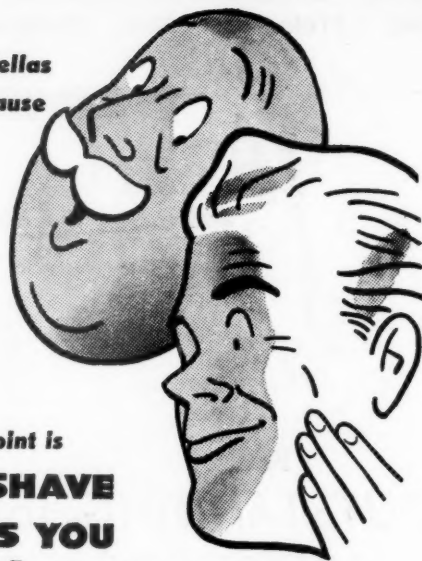
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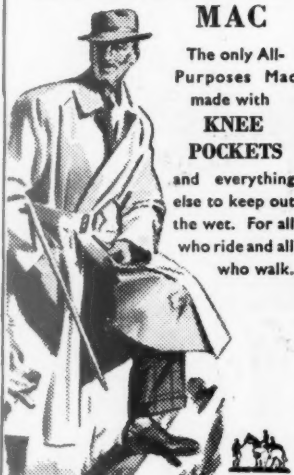
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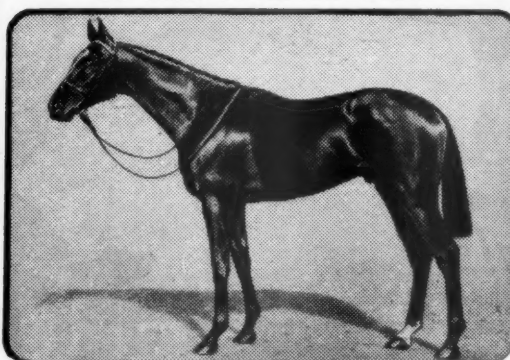
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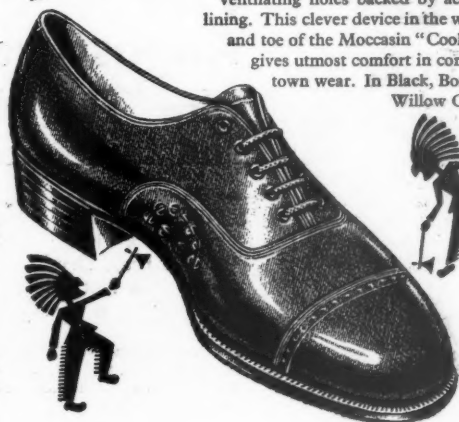


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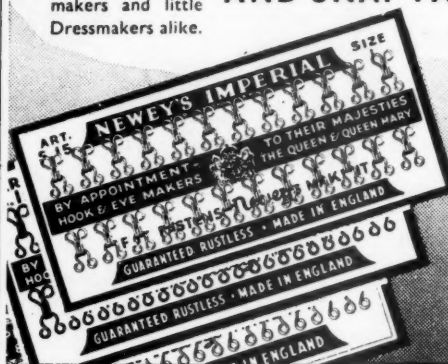
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If it fastens — NEWEYS make it

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Who is Sylvia?

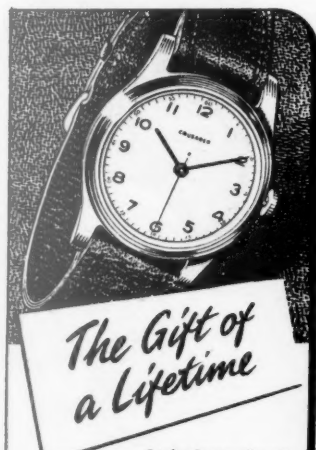
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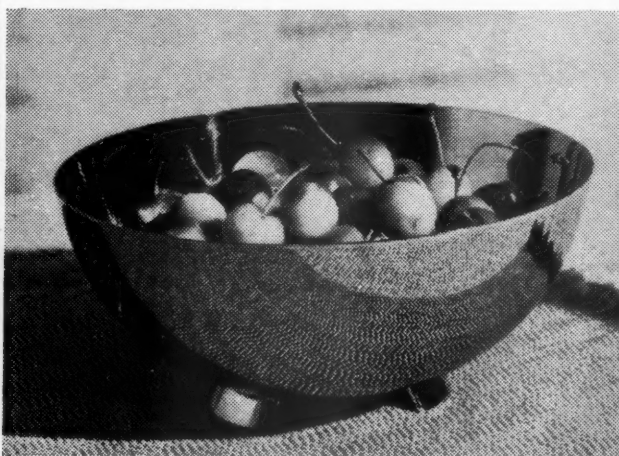
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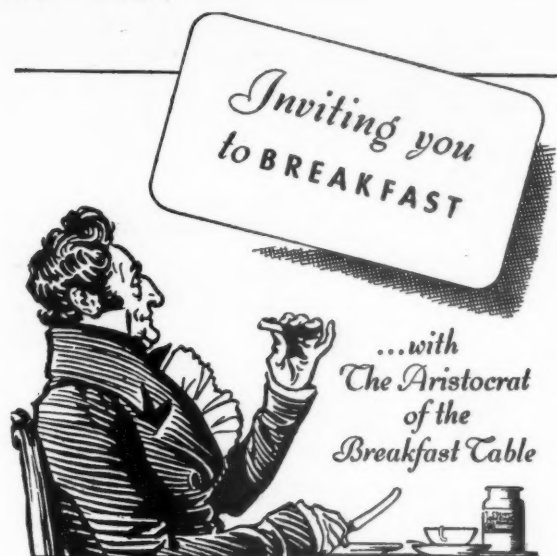
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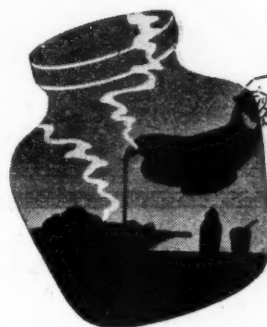
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for writing before*

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Steel prices in Britain have risen far less than manufactures generally.

Look at these figures →

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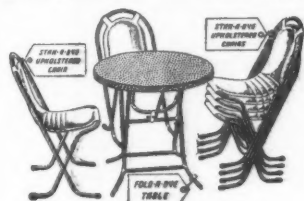
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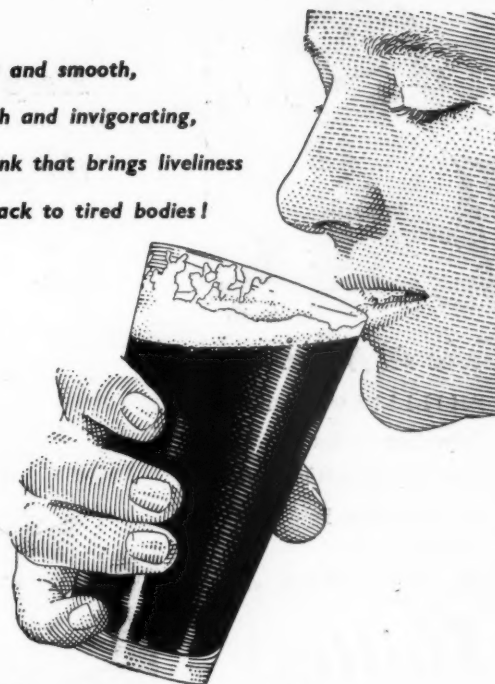


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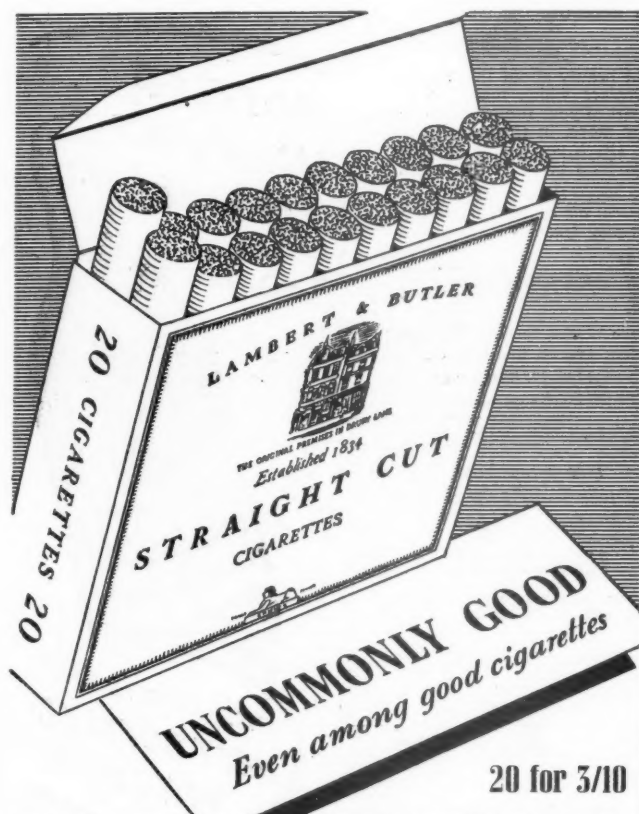


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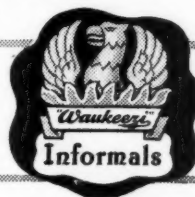
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... and FAREX for weaning
Weaning is happier with Farex to help. Glaxo Laboratories make this digestible, nourishing, bone and blood-building blend of cereals, which is readily accepted by babies. Farex needs no cooking — just add sugar and milk.

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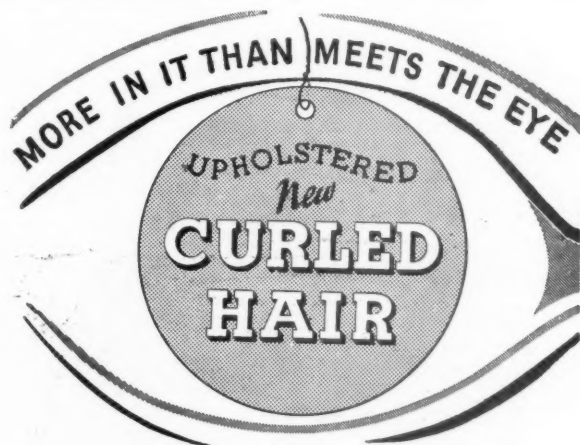
RECIPE FOR HORS D'OEUVRES MOULDS

- 1 pint water
- 3 level teasps. Lemco Consommé
- 2 level dessertsp. powdered gelatine
- 2 tablespoonsful mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoonful chopped olives or gherkins
- 1 teasp. grated onion
- 2 tablesps. grated carrot
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
- Small pieces of washed anchovies or hard cooked egg if liked.
- Salad plants to garnish.

Sprinkle gelatine on to the water, add Lemco Consommé, stir and heat slowly until both are dissolved. Strain into a basin and cool. Add mayonnaise and, when the jelly begins to thicken, stir in the other ingredients. Pour into six individual metal moulds, rinsed out with cold water, and chill. When quite firm turn out and garnish with tiny pieces of lettuce or watercress and radish roses.

LEMCO
Concentrated
CONSUMMÉ

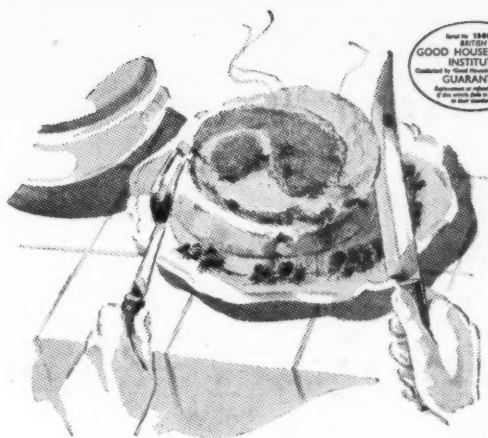
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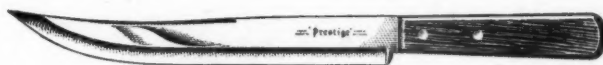
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Vol. CCXVI No. 5663

June 15 1949

Charivaria

THE Government has spent £15,000,000 on public relations and propaganda services in the last financial year. It is increasingly doubtful whether taxpayers can continue to support the Government in the style to which it has become accustomed.

"Lightning strikes Blackpool Tower," says a headline. They seem to follow Mr. Attlee about.



"General, Sweets, Tobacco, gold mine."

Advt. in Provincial paper

Never mind the gold mine: we'll take it.

A meteorologist predicts a short summer. Gloomy housewives are already looking up their recipes for green tomato chutney.

An engineer estimates that the Severn Barrage scheme will cost millions more than was at first anticipated. Still, it should prove to be one bit of planning that *will* hold water.

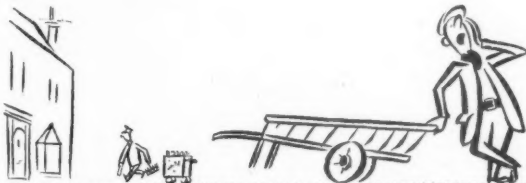
"FARMER FINED

Police Knew Difference Between Whisky and Soda Water."

"Arbroath Guide"

And what?

As a further gesture of defiance against their leaders, workers in certain industries are thinking of striking for better unions.



"Showman Strachey releases more ingredients for sweets," says a headline. On Barnum's assumption that there's one born every minute.

"Well-educated French student of good character, studious nature, wishes to spend month (August) with good English family, against lessons in French."—*Advt. in "The Times"*

Naturally.

A geologist thinks that Britain is slowly tilting towards the south. Even now anglers can be seen bracing themselves against the end of Brighton Pier.

"London.—Head Office of old-established Tariff Company requires two Clerks for Burglary Department, aged 21 to 25. Previous burglary experience desirable, but not essential. Reply Box 3488, Post Magazine Office."—*"The Post Magazine"*

Applicants should have the courage of their previous convictions.

A reference book of the Hollywood film industry is to be reissued. One suggestion is that the section dealing with the stars should be published separately under the title of *Who's Whose*.

Residents of one London suburb complain that they are disturbed at six o'clock in the morning by a man shouting "Any Old Rags?" They don't seem to understand that if he leaves it much later they will be wearing them.



Workers and Watchers

[A fancy, by an admirer of the novels of Miss Ivy Compton-Burnett, on the publication of her latest, *Two Worlds and Their Ways* (Gollancz, 10/6)]

"I FIND it makes me uneasy to be watched," said Edwin. "I should never have believed it."

"What we can believe depends on our capacity for belief," said his brother, hitting with a sledge-hammer the spike Edwin held upright in the road.

Edwin made no immediate response, allowing the spike to be hit three more times in succession by his remaining three companions.

"Our feelings on the matter are in any case irrelevant," said one of the latter, upon the completion of his stroke. "Those people watch us for their own amusement."

"They are very easily amused," said Edwin.

A policeman joined the watching group, gaily intoning "Now, what is all this?"

"I should have thought the source of our interest was obvious enough," said Mrs. Hunstantonby, smoothing the hair of the pale little boy who stood by her side.

"Will the men soon hit their spike again, mother?" said the latter, jumping up and down.

"I wish Osbaldeston would keep still," said his sister, looking coldly at him.

"So do we all, I should imagine."

"All? Do you imagine Osbaldeston himself wishes to keep still?"

"If that were so the explanation of his behaviour could be still more crudely put," said the policeman. "He would be in the grip of some nervous affliction."

Edwin set up the spike in a different place and sank upon his haunches, holding it steady.

"It is perhaps time for us to resume our performance," he said. "I have heard that a crowd may turn ugly when disappointed of the entertainment it had reason to expect."

"I never thought I should live to hear my own child abused by a guardian of the law," said Mrs. Hunstantonby, gazing intently at the spike in the road.

"It makes one wonder whether we shall not all soon be murdered in our beds," said another lady in the group.

"The suggestion that my son is in any way afflicted is offensive in the extreme," said Mrs. Hunstantonby. "That it should have come from a policeman is the crowning touch."

"That is telling him," said Edwin's brother, bringing his sledge-hammer down on the spike. "It pleases me to be present when an officer of the law is in receipt of a raspberry."

Osbaldeston looked up at his mother, ignoring the spectacle of the other three men hitting the spike.

"Mother, did you give the policeman a raspberry?" he said. "Have you any more? Will there be one for me?"

Mrs. Hunstantonby made no reply, but distended her nostrils.

"I do not like raspberries," said the other child. "Outside they are too soft, and inside they are too hard. They are just the sort of thing a policeman would like, but Osbaldeston should know better."

"Why should I be expected to know better than a policeman? I think it is unfair to expect such a thing."

"Hush," said his mother.

"Well, I never did have very much education," said the policeman, with an indulgent look. "It seems not without the bounds of possibility that the boy knows better than I do, about some things."

"About raspberries?" said the little girl. "There, mother, the policeman admits it. Osbaldeston knows more than he does about raspberries."

Edwin's brother was now hitting the spike again.

"It is strange to hear such a proposition seriously advanced," he said, having done so. "The child's assertion seems on the face of it calculated to tax the credulity of even the simplest mind."

"We have simple minds down here," said Edwin.

"There are more up there, if you ask me."

"You cannot pretend that anyone was asking you," said one of his companions. "The question would have been put in a manner at once more explicit and less emphatic."

Mrs. Hunstantonby pulled Osbaldeston to her with a sharp movement.

"You must not remove things from other people's pockets, my little son," she said. "Restore that to its owner this instant."

"As I remember, you made no objection when father used to do it," said Osbaldeston, complying with a sulky look.

"Your father was the breadwinner of the family," said his mother. "I shall always regret his departure."

She looked at the workmen again, and looked away when she met Edwin's glance.

"I often think it was foolish of him to murder that man," she said. "It would surely have been easy enough to pick his pocket without hitting him on the head first."

"The technical difficulties of any calling seem simple to the onlooker," said Edwin, setting up the spike in a new position. "That is one of the professional man's exasperations."

"For example, I am sure that policeman thinks it is easy to hit a spike with a hammer," said Edwin's brother, doing so.

"I am quite positive it is," said the policeman, stepping over a rope and advancing to the group of workmen. "Nevertheless at the moment I have no wish to demonstrate my ability in that direction."

"We are to assume that he is here in the exercise of his own profession," said Edwin with a look of resignation, standing up.

"That is so. Your name is Edwin Hunstantonby?"

"Yes."

"I have a warrant for your arrest," said the policeman. "I must ask you to come along of me."

"Mother, why does the policeman say 'of me' rather than 'with me'?" said Osbaldeston.

"Hush, dear. We have already heard from his own lips that he has not had the benefits of education."

"And will somebody else hold the spike now?" said the little girl, as the policeman led Edwin away.

"A moment's scrutiny of the positions of the remaining workmen would have convinced you that your inquiry was superfluous," said Mrs. Hunstantonby. "We must learn to avoid asking unnecessary questions, must we not?"

RICHARD MALETT

Railway Fare

At Euston they served a Victoria sponge—
So were asked, with a smile sardonic,
If for drink would appear
Waterlookewarm beer,
Or a Gin and Paddingtonic.

WOON



STICK TO IT

"No, John, we certainly *can't* put the sail up yet."



"Don't worry, madam, an experienced baby-sitter like myself will know how to deal with the little brat."

Indecent Haste

ONE of our opponents' team had a son-in-law who wanted a game. Afterwards we saw that this way of putting it was a deliberate ruse. He may not have been the fastest bowler in the world; I have not played enough cricket to be certain about that. What made it intolerable was that he bounced the balls in the right place; and although I am a very stylish batsman, I must have time to think.

Most of the batsmen were out when I went in, for I am usually held in reserve in case the others fail. I faced a slow bowler. He bowled a floating delivery to try to persuade me to knock up a catch, but I struck the ball so powerfully that it went right over the umpire's head, and the other batsman and I both ran one. Their captain, plainly worried, put the son-in-law on at the other end to bowl at me purposely.

The son-in-law had a savage appearance. He wore his shaggy hair low down; his arms were covered with grotesque spiral ridges; and his trousers were baggy, ill-fitting, and of very poor quality. I scrutinized the field carefully. I always do this when I remember, as I was once run out through failing to notice a fielder. Even after I had completed my examination and had made a mark on the ground to hold my bat on, the son-in-law was still walking away from me. I thought at first that he was going home to change his trousers, but he stopped when he had become a mere silhouette and began to attack the grass with his heel. I think he was working himself up into a temper. He was practically beside himself when he began rushing back. The hand with the ball in was wiggling up and down with extraordinary speed. I always watch the bowler's hand in case he is going to

bowl a yorker or a shooter or something. Suddenly he stopped and poised himself on one foot for a fraction of a second and then began running again. He kept on stopping, and I found myself hoping that he had hiccups. He was quite close now. I could see his cruel mouth working and his little yellow eyes peering at me through his tawny hair. Suddenly he sprang into the air with both hands aloft. He had seen the whites of my eyes. I stepped away so that he could not get me leg-before-wicket or caught in the slips. I did not actually see the ball. I saw a dark line and felt a cold draught down my back. I thought of appealing for more light, but it was only two o'clock. The son-in-law followed the ball so far down the pitch that I thought that, in his disappointment at having missed me, he was going to launch a personal attack. My stumps were still standing upright.

He was coming back again in the same trousers. He was boiling with fury, hopping and wiggling with an unparalleled ferocity. It was terrible to think that he was a married man. I stepped away to give myself plenty of room so that I could use the long handle on him. The ball tore over the boundary. I had scored four byes, despite the ring of fielders right behind the wicket-keeper. I wondered if I could not score more byes by waving my bat in front of the wicket-keeper's eyes, but I realized that I should never be able to reach him in time.

The shaggy silhouette was materializing again, its trousers flapping like broken concertinas. I began to feel confident. I knew that he could not get me caught in the deep field even if he tried. I shaped up to him with my left elbow as far up as it would go. He was just about to stand on one leg for the last time when I saw a small boy walking right right across my line of vision. It would never do for me to become unsighted. I put my left hand up quickly—my left elbow was already up—and turned my back. The umpire, a just man, threw himself across the path of the oncoming son-in-law.

It took some time to put the stumps up again and to find another umpire. I was looked upon with some curiosity, especially as there was now no small boy to be seen; but I explained carefully, and they all said that they understood all right.

I saw the next ball all the way. I should say that the son-in-law had lost his nerve. He certainly had one, wearing those trousers. The ball left his hand too late and struck the ground with an awful thud a few feet in front of him. It rose steeply and came screaming towards me at a comparatively moderate pace. I held my bat far out and with a sweet turn of the wrists deflected the ball over the heads of the slips for four runs. One of the fielders tried to catch it, but my cuts are not so easily caught.

I am afraid I was out next ball. I played a perfect stroke to the right-hand side, for I had got his measure by now, but I think my bat was a little too far away. The stumps were in a terrible tangle, and I admit freely that I was out. Perhaps it was a googly; I must look up how to play them.

I found out afterwards that if I had survived to the end of the over I should not have had to face the son-in-law again. He had to be home by three o'clock to mind the baby while his wife went to the pictures. She would be better employed making him a new pair of trousers.

June

A WIND was born in the Western Isles,
It wed with a soft air out of Skye;
By sea-green islands and sea-blue kyles,
Over the long grey moorland miles,
You could hear the new wind fly.

The red stag raised his handsome head,
He snuffed the weather below the screes,
And straight he called to his hinds and led
Away to the high-top watershed
And the summer sanctuaries.

The blue hares jumped like Jack-in-the-box,
They chased and capered over the hill;
Up in the corrie the old dog fox
Crept from his cavern in the rocks
And rolled his foolish fill.

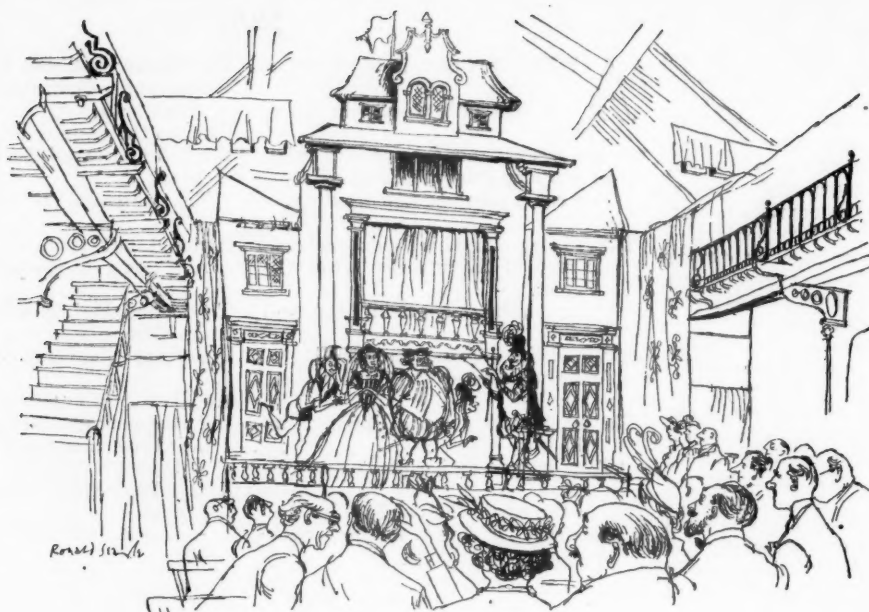
The blackcock flirited his feather fan,
The capper challenged with bounce and brag;
Grey on the granite, the ptarmigan
Clucked and curtsied and hopped and ran;
The peregrines on the crag

Arrowed the air with whistle and whirr,
And down on the levels beside the burn
The roebuck barked in the larch and fir;
From Skye to Spey they were all astir,
For the times were on the turn.

And I woke up at the crack of five
As the sun came lifting over the Ben;
I heard the new wind hustle and drive
And I knew that the year had come alive
And that June stood in the glen.
H. B.



"Now what have I said?"



British Theatre Exhibition, Birmingham

IF even we calloused moderns gasp a little when a real motor-car or a live horse comes on to the stage, how infinitely more astonished must have been a Victorian audience in 1885 to see sparks shower from the sword of Mephistopheles? Many must have thought it a direct intervention from Another Place, but in fact Irving, who had a wire running up his leg and a copper plate on the sole of his shoe, had risked his life for art by treading on another plate powerfully charged with electricity. Shuddering to-day at the flimsiness of the wiring, one can only guess how close the great actor came to being fried alive in front of his worshippers; but it's a guess anybody can make who goes, before it closes at the end of this week, to the British Theatre Exhibition, the first of its kind in this country, at the Bingley Hall, Birmingham, where Irving's diableries are only one of a thousand histrionic delights.

Long ago I was forced to the conclusion that the only reliable index to the quality of an exhibition is the fatigue factor. All exhibitions are uncannily exhausting, but the maxim that the longer the point of total collapse is deferred the better the exhibition I have found in practice to be a far safer guide than any mere slavish totting-up of individual merits. At Birmingham I survived two days of

happy goggling without recourse to medical aids, and I can therefore say at once and with confidence that this must be a very good exhibition indeed.

Presented by the *Birmingham Post* in association with Sir Barry Jackson and the Arts Council, it ranges widely over the whole field of our theatre, and a vast amount of patient work has clearly gone to its making. Where I think the organizers have been especially clever is that without creating any intellectual frontiers they have catered generously both for those whose interest in things theatrical is only general, who like to see Mr. So-and-So in a nice strong piece, and also for those sterner specimens eager to peer into the works. There is something, and much more than something, for everybody. You can feast on the present—and never has there been greater activity in the theatre—and equally you can soak yourself in the past.

I suggest we do that first, because the Historical Section is remarkably fine. Here, on both sides of a long screen, is a collection of pictures and photographs arranged in chronological order to show the development of British theatre all the way from church plays to *The Winslow Boy*. Some of these exhibits are lovely, some hilarious to the irreverent eye, but between them they would give a cultural ambassador from the moon an excellent

idea of how theatrical taste and method have all the time been changing over the last five hundred years. What strikes one most about the eighteenth-century engravings—beauties, most of them—is a muscular abandon in the poses such as no modern actor dare imitate for a moment. Garrick, for instance, waving an enormous sword as Richard the Third, challenges the entire gallery to come and get him, Mrs. Siddons, in *The Grecian Daughter*, is beckoning with her whole body to some ethereal fire-brigade, while Kemble as Coriolanus—well, nobody would have hissed him twice.

The early nineteenth century was of similarly heroic calibre, though Charles Kean appears too anæmic a Macbeth to stab a mouse. Edmund Kean looks tremendous as Othello, and in a drama called *The Wreck Ashore* (I feel sure a little first-aid would easily revive it), John Reeve is injecting such wonderfully jovial villainy into a character named Marmaduke Magog that you can almost hear his chesty cackle through the glass. When we come to the Victoriana many of the exhibits have a rich vulgarity which seem to take the period farther from us than that even of Garrick. I like particularly the print of Irving playfully tweaking Ellen Terry's ear in a well-stocked library (as Napoleon and Madame Sans Gêne), and the poster of a play curtly

entitled *Drink*, showing berserk washer-women madly slinging buckets of water at each other in a rather soiled laundry.

In the same section is a splendid collection of costumes, of which an exquisite flowered dress worn by Ellen Terry as Nance Oldfield is my pick, a gallery of players past and present, and a number of beautiful models, the most exciting illustrating the backstage arrangements of a theatre in 1766. The craziest contrivances were used—but they worked. The scenery slid in grooves in full view of the audience, huge drums up by the flies dragged the borders into place; and across the top, at a lethal height, was a narrow bridge across which, I like to think, actors who had over-reached themselves were made to walk the plank. And there is also a capital model of an Elizabethan theatre, made by twelve-year-olds of the Intermediate School, Blowers Green Road, Dudley, who have every reason to be proud lads.

Elizabethan Theatre? One of the chief features of the Exhibition is a reconstructed apron-stage, where the Arts Council's able Midland Company gives an hour of Shakespeare three times a day. Some of the details of the stage are of course debatable, this being a matter over which professors continually shake their pipes at one another, but the reproduction must be pretty near the original. Mr. Punch's Artist has shown you how it looks, and my main impression is that excerpts as varied as the balcony scene, the ragging of Malvolio and the noisier bits of *Julius Caesar* sit it so naturally that, not for the first time, I wonder if our younger producers know what they are about in tacking complicated scenic frills on to poetry which demonstrably has no need of them. This stage has sufficient to please the eye, but little to distract the mind; it is as simple as it is practical, and for once Shakespeare's thunder is not swallowed by a yawning orchestra pit. The whole effect of the performance is charming,



and a graceful prologue by Mr. J. C. Trewin sets it off.

Just outside, before we have a saving cup of tea, is a useful series of pictures got together by the Arts Council to show the history of Shakespearian production; and, having had it, the stands await us. Most of the more active companies, including the Old Vic and Covent Garden, are represented, their work being seen in designers' original sketches and in delightful little model stages, beautifully lit and mounted with perfect replicas of particular scenes. If one of these stands is better than the rest it is that of the Birmingham Rep, where examples of décor, mostly by Mr. Paul Shelving, are shown off to excellent advantage.

The most striking set piece in the Exhibition, which Mr. P.'s A. has drawn for you, has been done by Mr. Osborne Robinson for the Northampton Rep. Constructed of all sorts of odds and ends (including a glamorous dummy from a draper's window) it is exceedingly effective, and a good deal more so than the rather pretentious façade of the Stratford stand, where a bust of the Bard is caught up in the cordage of a lifeboat from the sea coast of Bohemia.

A theatrical Zoo is a very pleasing idea, and here, behind a card saying

PLEASE DO NOT TEASE, TOUCH OR FEED

we meet a throng of eminent stage beasts, presided over by our now very old friend, the original crocodile from *Peter Pan*. For me he declined absolutely to tick, but you may catch him in a larger mood.

Then there are the models of the mobile theatre which the Century Theatre of Hinckley plans to have on the road by the end of the year, if subscriptions for this gallant non-profit-making venture roll in fast enough. It is certainly extraordinarily ingenious. Four large aluminium caravans open out to form a complete playhouse seating over two hundred people in comfort, with a good stage, well-sited dressing-rooms, and electric lighting and heating. Other caravans take care of the actors, and the whole unit is self-contained down to a generator and water-tank. In fact, all the problems of the small touring company appear to have been met, and hermits in the wilds can hope to see some live professional theatre again.



And on another stand, if your tissues are not yet too frayed, lie the fruits of a novel experiment in detection on which two enthusiasts, Mr. Raymond Mander and Mr. Joe Mitchenson, have been engaged for five years. Discovering that the potters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries often copied without acknowledgment from theatrical prints, they have made a large collection of figures and tracked down their origins, though this has sometimes meant following slender clues for months. In most cases figure and print are shown together, and to compare them is fascinating.

Marionettes have not been forgotten, for the brilliant Lanchester troupe performs four times a day in its own theatre, and the Birmingham Puppetry Guild exhibits some lively local products, glove puppets as well as marionettes; nor have posters, of which Messrs. Mander and Mitchenson have lent a selection that makes one long for a rover ticket to the great occasions of the past.

It seems a vast pity that such an exhibition should be out of the reach of so many playgoers. Birmingham has got in first, and more power to it, but what about London? Surely something on the same lines should be added to the official fun for 1951?

ERIC KEOWN

At the Pictures

They Live By Night—Yellow Sky

AGAIN a good film is hidden under a title one might think had been deliberately chosen to confuse. The title *They Live By Night* (Director: NICHOLAS RAY), with its ring at once



(They Live By Night)

Force of Arms

Keechie—CATHY O'DONNELL

Bowie—FARLEY GRANGER

stern and vaguely "modern," drifts like a bus-ticket on to the overburdened memory's heap of similar four-word, four-syllable, four-accent, uninformative titles, and after a month or two only the clear-headed will be able to extract it whole and accurate and with its correct associations.

It is worth remembering that this title identifies an unpretentious but exceptionally satisfying film of crime, pursuit and young love. This is one of the results (*The Window*, now showing in the same programme, is another) of a big Hollywood company's experimental policy of allowing some less-expensive or "B" pictures to be made by comparative newcomers free of the play-safe obsession that afflicts the jaded maker of second features. Good critical opinions may have helped *The Window* to something of the success it deserves, though local cinemas continue to advertise it on the lower half of a double bill; I hope *They Live By Night* will have still better luck. It is the story of three escaped convicts, and particularly of the youngest of them who falls in love with the quiet girl at the lonely filling-station where they hide. They have a "twenty-dollar wedding" at a comically dingy marriage-office and escape for a period of

happiness in a holiday camp—till one of the others catches up with them and involves the young man in another robbery, which goes wrong and leads eventually to his death. About the elements of the little tragedy, in fact, there is nothing unfamiliar; its fresh and individual impression comes from the character in the acting, the imaginative skill and pace of the direction, the crispness of the photography, and the human sympathy behind the narrative. The people who on principle avoid "all crime films" or "all American films," can be assured that this time they are missing something good.

Nearly all the ingredients of a conventional Western are in *Yellow Sky* (Director: WILLIAM A. WELLMAN): the hold-up, the chase, the gun-battle (among rocks, so that bullets may whine), the "ghost" mining town, the young woman who can use a gun, the Injuns—you know them all.

What makes it remarkably good of its kind is the combined effect of certain comparatively small points of technical style, notably the frequent use of dead silence and natural sound and, in the camera-work, the great play made with bold areas and bars of jet black. This question of sound and silence is very important, especially in an open-air picture; and it can be as much of a satisfaction to have one's ear concentrated, as it were, on the gurgle and chuckle of a stream or on the rush of wind as it is to have one's eye concentrated on a scene from a good pictorial angle.

This is another story of a group of fugitives: outlaws on the run in the old West (1867) after a bank robbery. Trailing many miles across desolate salt-flats they come upon the remains of a mining town, deserted except for an old man and his grand-daughter whose secret is (they soon discover) gold; and gold has its usual disastrous effect on the good feeling of the party. The situation is resolved conventionally enough—the

leader (GREGORY PECK) reforms and gets the girl (ANNE BAXTER), the villain (RICHARD WIDMARK) is killed—but the style of the whole thing is admirable, and in every scene there are details (the barking dog after the quiet hold-up, the dusty wind through the silent street, the faint sound of the cocking of a gun, the startled horses' shadows on a shutter) for the ear and the eye to delight in.

Talking of titles, this one doesn't mean much, either: "Yellow Sky" is simply the name of the town. But the very oddity of that fact should help you to remember it.

* * * * *

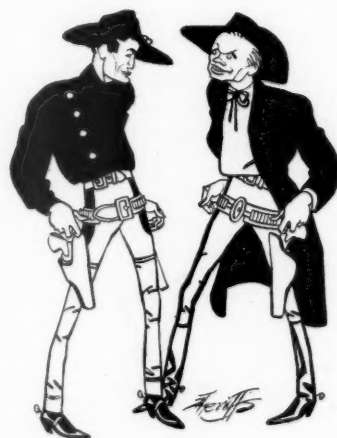
Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Apart from the two mentioned above, the London programme I would most recommend is at the Rialto, which is showing that long, sprawling, miscellaneously enjoyable French picture *Les Enfants du Paradis* (18/12/46).

Notable in the list of provincial and suburban "possibles" is *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (27/10/48), but you are hardly likely to need any advice about that; nor about *Passport to Pimlico* (11/5/49), that excellent British comedy. *Unfaithfully Yours* (2/3/49) is a Preston Sturges lark, uneven but with extremely funny bits that make it worth while; *The Queen of Spades* (30/3/49) a very interestingly-made, good-to-look-at British version of the Pushkin story; *Once a Jolly Swagman* (5/1/49), a sound, informative, entertaining British picture about speedway racing.

RICHARD MALLETT



(Yellow Sky)

Delicacy of Legs

Stretch—GREGORY PECK

Dude—RICHARD WIDMARK

I Was a Studio Deadhead

WELL, I dunno what we did wrong, Lil, I'm sure. I mean, there we were, me and Bert, in that little theatre place, us and about five hundred others, and all we did was to show appreciation for what they give us. And now all these clever newspaper writers keep getting at us, natter, natter, natter, and calling us insulting names just because we showed a little appreciation for what we got. And I mean, it wasn't as if we'd had to pay for our tickets either, was it?

Variety show, it was. One of those special ones they put on sometimes. I do love them, I must say. I think they're ever so nice. I'm glad you were listening. I always listen myself when I get the chance. And when Bert come to me and said he'd got tickets, well, I really was ever so pleased, I don't mind telling you.

So we got into our seats about five rows back from the front, and I tell you we were both feeling so excited that when the orchestra started up with that tune they always play, we just clapped and cheered our heads off. I expect you must have heard us because they usually come on the air about that time.

Well, when they'd finished, the man who was announcing came forward and he really was *nice*—just like you'd think he'd be. And the first thing he said was "This is the B.B.C. Light Programme"—ever so posh—and then he went on to tell us who was coming on first. And who do you think it was, Lil?

Oh, I was forgetting you knew. Seems funny to think of you being able to hear everything. Yes, it was the Pizolli Brothers—and you know how I like them. I think they sing ever so beautifully with all those lovely close harmonies, and Bert he thinks the same as me, too. So you can see that when we heard they were coming on—well, what with them and that nice announcer, me and Bert just cheered and *cheered* and Bert put in that special whistle of his which he was keeping for his Mum who was listening. I expect you must have heard it too, although there were a lot of other boys around us all whistling as well—but my Bert's seemed to be the loudest and I know for sure he was the last to stop, because he'd told his Mum he would be.

Now it's funny you should say that, Lil, because I didn't think the Pizolli Brothers were as good as usual either. I didn't like that second song of theirs,

but—well, it was all so nice and cosy in there that we gave them a real good clap when they'd finished, and Bert put in his special whistle again and that set all the others off, so that it must have sounded as if we thought them a bit better than they really were. But no harm done, is there? I mean, we couldn't just sit there and do nothing, could we?

The one I really liked best was Billy Walgrove. He was a perfect *scream*. All those funny faces he kept making—why, honest, I was laughing so much I nearly choked. And when he put on that silly little hat—really, Lil, I could have died! I only wish you could have seen it. And the things he *said*! That

joke about the man tripping over that other man's feet in the crowded railway carriage! Well, yes, I'd heard it before, too, but I still think it's ever so funny. I know it made me and Bert *shriek*. And when he talked about the Test Match . . . why, don't you see, Lil, that was *topical*, same as when he talked about the weather. Me and Bert thought that was real clever of him and we gave him a special extra big clap just to show how much we appreciated it.

I don't think that was so unreasonable, do you? And yet these newspaper clever-dicks keep on at us, natter, natter, natter.

I dunno why, I'm sure . . .



"I've got a job working in a Ladies' Beauty Salon—until I can find something rather more permanent."



"Will those in favour signify in the usual manner?"

Mr. Smith Washes Up

Him to that cool Domain
With gleaming Tiles in smooth mosaic lin'd
Resplendent, she with utmost vigour urg'd
(Obdurate *Eve*), nor stai'd her ruthless Hand
Until through leaden Tube and brazen Vent
Flow'd down the aqueous Streame. With swift
dispatch,
He of his outward Cloake himself depriv'd,
Obedient though resentfull, and uproll'd
The flaxen Sleeve. Wher-on accoutr'd wel
(Yet fearfull) straight he charg'd the steaming Bowle;
Whate're of potters Art by Fyr anneal'd
In *Burslem*, *Tunstall*, *Hanley*, *Stoke-on-Trent*,
Or vitreous Glasse, or wel attemp'r'd Steele

In iv'ry sockett fix'd, he straightway cleans'd
From prandial Soyle. Yet stil unconsummate
The toylsom Labour; hee the pendent square
Of woven fabrick, potent to remove
Ablutionary slime, reluctant took
And therewithal by doubtfull Art acheav'd
The Task assign'd. Lyk wanton Boys releas'd
From irksom Toyle and busie Pedants rule,
Anon with eager Feet they celebrate
The idle Howre, and in excess of Joye
O'errun sweet Liberty, soe he absolv'd
From servile Bond in glad Enfranchisement
Return'd exulting, where at Ease reclin'd
His unrelenting Mate . . .



PARENTS' DAY



"Guess what, darling. Flash bit his first postman this morning."

That Silent Sea

FROZEN it was, with lumps of ice, and things,
And walruses, a horrid sight to see.
Yet there I went, for little Lucy Bings,
The maiden of my dreams, rejected me.

So, sadly, I encamped upon a floe.
I had a brazier to warm my toes,
But through the melted ice it sank below,
Leaving a little hole that swiftly froze.

There, then, I sat, bemocked by dreary dreams,
All, all alone, companion had I none,
Watching upon the ice the pallid gleams
Of a most execrable midnight sun.

With winter to my igloo I retired,
To spend the longest night that one could wish;
I played upon a zither I had hired
And slept upon a bank of frozen fish,

Which, tearing with my teeth, I gnawed away
When hunger seized me in the midnight watch;
And every seventh calculated day
I took a little teaspoonful of Scotch.

So thirty years went by; below my knee
Hung my long beard, I used it as a glove.
I was not happy in that silent sea,
But O! the things a man will do for love.

R. P. LISTER

The Child at Wuthering Heights

ON the morning of a fine June day—it is the worthy Nelly Dean speaking—"my first bonny little nursling and the last of the ancient Earnshaw stock was born." This child, since she must have somebody to carry on the story, Emily Brontë preserves alive, and calls him Hareton, bringing him at last to a fair issue. The mother of course dies.

A certain amount of vicissitude attends the growing boy. There are those about him—Hindley, his father (possessed), and the demon lovers, Heathcliff and Catherine, who show no aptitude at all for nursing. Nelly does what she can, but her best providence is to keep little Hareton out of his relatives' way. Where she fails, the child has his crowded hours.

For instance, a word lisped out of place one day puts him into Aunt Catherine's arms, to be shaken "till the poor child waxed livid." Nelly whisks him away to the kitchen. But she must now prepare against his father's coming, and this she does by "stowing his son away in the kitchen cupboard." She also takes the shot out of Hindley's fowling-piece.

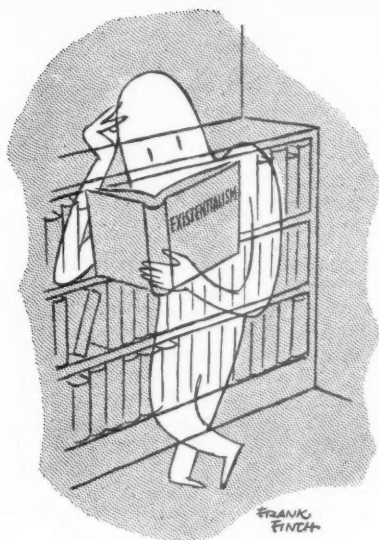
Hindley enters with an oath and casts about for little Hareton, who, being discovered, shows some reluctance to be either "squeezed and kissed to death" or "flung into the fire," which are the normal alternatives. Though, to be sure, he might be dashed against the wall. Hindley takes this amiss. After all, he only wants to cut the child's ears off. "Unnatural cub!" he cries. "As sure as I'm living I'll break the brat's neck."

This began, perhaps, as a figure of speech, but honest Hindley does his best to make it good. Grabbing the child, he runs upstairs with it and then (as one will) holds it over the landing banister to listen to a sound. The sound is Heathcliff, who stumps upstairs wondering whether to kill Hindley or let him die of drink. Little Hareton, struggling to be free, pitches head-first over the banister, but is caught by Heathcliff and set unharmed on his feet. Heathcliff bitterly regrets this good turn. "Had it been dark, I dare say he would have tried to remedy the mistake by smashing Hareton's skull on the steps." But every life has its disappointments.

Anyway, the father, part-sobered, orders the child and Nelly away and promises not to murder Heathcliff "to-night," unless, he adds, in a saving proviso, by setting fire to the house. This gesture he celebrates with a pint of brandy, drunk (superfluously, one feels) to his own damnation.

Little Hareton is nursed back to his five wits by Nelly and then unwisely entrusted to Catherine, while Nelly makes the supper. It is not, therefore, surprising that when next we hear of the child he is "flung" on to the settle by the lady as she runs out after Heathcliff. There, it would seem, he falls asleep, and sleeps through the thunderstorm that winds up the day. One feels he might do worse, for all these things had befallen him in twenty-four hours.

Were all his days as exacting as this, one might be concerned for the child. Perhaps, in fact, they were, but mercifully we hear no more of him for over four years. We can only hope that through fifty hectic months he grew inured to peril, or that Nelly (till she was packed off) became more adroit in her protection. Emily's reticence is no guarantee that she could not have kept up the pace—



and hotly, too, but in Heathcliff and Catherine she had other fish to fry and Hareton must suffer in silence.

When he re-enters, it is to act as well as suffer. Nelly revisits the Heights to see how the battle goes up there and meets little Hareton at the gate.

"'God bless thee, darling!' I cried . . . He retreated out of arm's length and picked up a large flint."

It is clear the child had acquired a useful knowledge of tactics. He is prepared for any relative. The stone strikes Nelly's hat and is followed by a string of curses, "delivered," we are told, "with practised emphasis"—an acquired habit with little relish of salvation in't, but not without survival value in that ferocious setting.

The ever-to-be-admired Nelly rewards him with a couple of oranges. Did the curate teach him those words? she asks, not perhaps as uncharitably as it seems, for she only asked for information; but Hareton says crisp things about the curate and gives all the credit to Heathcliff, who now appears and scares Nelly away.

And that is the last glimpse we have of Hareton as a child: last but one, for Heathcliff's wife follows family precedent by knocking him down in her flight from the Heights, as he is engaged in the amiable pursuit of hanging a litter of puppies.

Of his development into a sort of young Squire Sullen this is no place to speak. Nor does Emily more than sketch it with a few bitter strikes. His fate, after heading for the bizarre, deviates into the normal. It flings him into the arms of Catherine's daughter and threatens him with happiness. One doubts if he will show any aptitude for it.

Then Emily tires of him. Married felicity is not proper to the Heights and she gets back (with an cuff! of relief) to the endemic misery of Heathcliff, whom at last she sends, with the lingering enjoyment of a connoisseur, to his grave.

Hareton, as I said, was never more than a side issue. Had he been the hero of this expert in evil he would have gone farther and fared worse, but with Heathcliff absorbing so much of the author's malevolence, his is a comparatively even life. He might so easily have been, in fact as well as in name, the desperate last of the Earnshaws.

And Is There Honey Still for Tea?

"DR. SUMMERSKILL: Invert sugar (the principal ingredient of imitation honey) is the result of the breaking down of sucrose with acid. (Laughter.) It is a mixture of glucose and fructose. (Laughter and cheers.)"—*"The Times"*

. . . Still in the dusk, for you and me,
Stands the dear table set for tea.
Strong men have starved and died, bydam,
Rather than eat synthetic jam;
And curates (long preferred) have been
Profane on tasting margarine;
But invert sugar, soft and sweet,
Is nectar such as gods may eat,
And hungry men have had their fill
Of honey *à la Summerskill* . . .
Oh; there the sucrose, tea-time through,
Acidulated makes for you
A candied ooze, a treacly spread,
Upon your stale yet friendly bread.
Glucose and fructose blur and blend
In one mellifluous, viscid end;
While cheers and laughter blend and blur
At Westminster, at Westminster . . .



"Good evening—you advertised for a sitter-in."

Extracts from the New Oxford Guide

On Writing Books

SOONER or later all Oxford men come to this, which makes it so characteristic that the conscientious tourist will certainly want to know about it. I mean, of course, writing learned books, not just writing detective stories, which is done outside Oxford too, though not so much. The difference between writing learned books and writing detective stories is mainly observable in the later stages, when detective stories manifest themselves as a number of very long thin proof-sheets which it is nearly always fatal for the dog to get amongst. Learned books, on the other hand, appear as page-proofs, and this means that the alterations which every learned author always wants to make at this stage are terribly expensive, and although the Great Press which is producing his book will always perform miracles, the author knows that it is looking at him askance. Being a sensitive man he feels this.

The stage before the proofs is not of interest to the tourist, being identical with Reading in Bodley. It goes on for a very long time, but nowadays the proof stage often goes on much longer.

Besides the alterations which the author wants to make in the proofs there are the corrections of the proof-readers. These will make the author wonder why books are written by people who are not proof-readers, because it will soon be clear to him that proof-readers know absolutely everything about the subject and authors very little indeed. On the other hand if the proof-readers wrote the books there would be nobody to read their proofs, and there is really no way out of this difficulty.

Proof-readers of the Great Press are always right about facts and about spelling, which last is a thing Oxford men know very little about. On the other hand they always alter punctuation so as to give the sentence a different meaning. There must be a reason for this, but authors have never found it out.

Several proof-readers are employed on the same book, and the author who is properly under their spell will often find himself agreeing to change back all the things the reader of the first proof asked him to alter, at the suggestion of the reader of the second proof. This ensures that Nothing is Overlooked.

Another important aspect of writing books is the Preface. This is done last, often after the author has had a lot of proofs so that he can thank the proof-readers properly. He always thanks them for their courtesy, but not usually for knowing the facts better than he did when he wrote the book. This is called convention.

A word must be said here about indexes. These too are done at an advanced stage so as to incorporate all those page numbers which are what makes an index so useful. Some authors have to do their own. Others get other people to do the work for them. The characteristics of indexes done by other people are the odd headings they put things under and the fact that they do not provide nearly as many cross references as the author would like. The characteristic of indexes done by the author is the amount he has to cut out when the printers tell him that it is going to take up too much space.

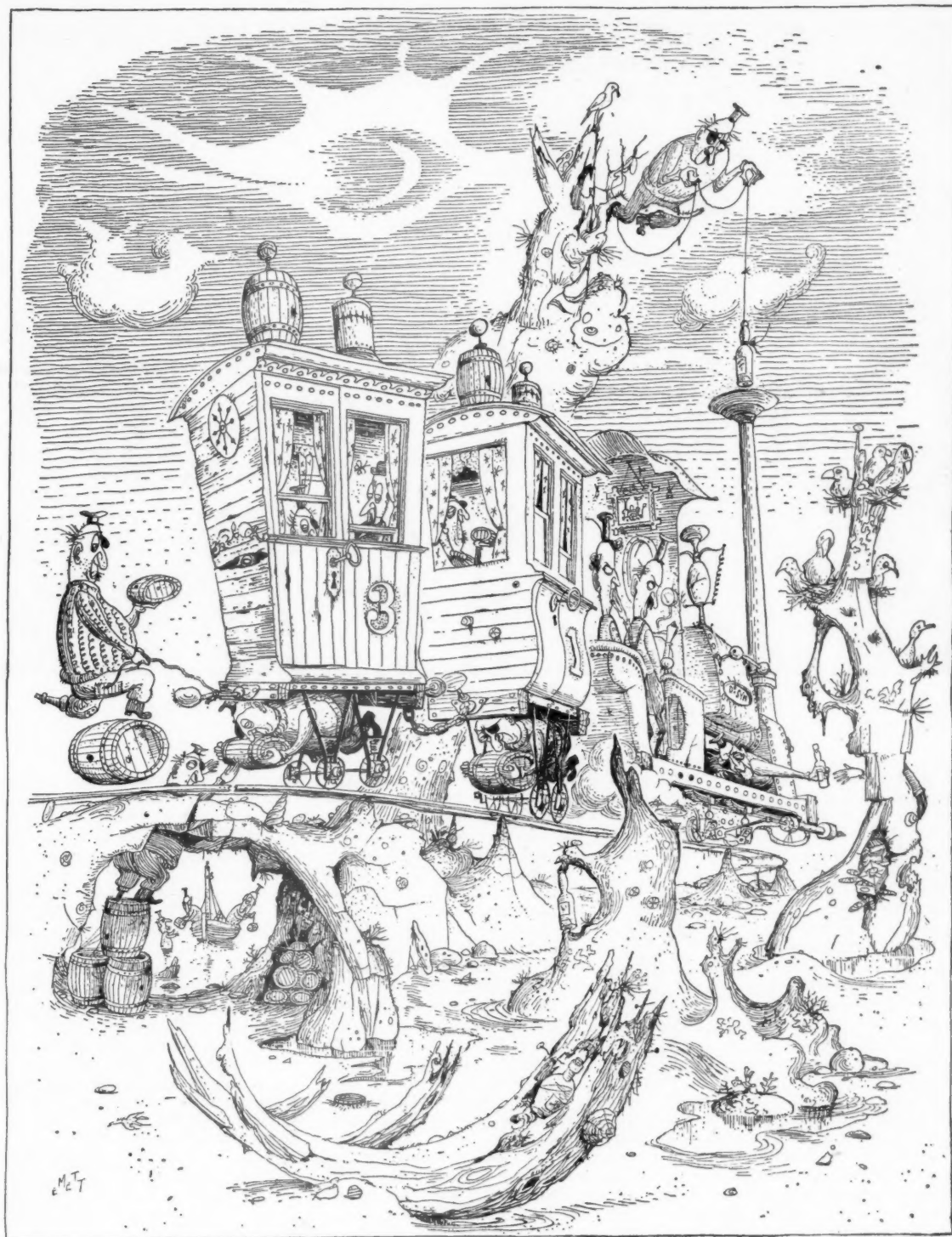
Before they are the last pages of books indexes are a lot of little cards arranged in alphabetical order. Authors always keep these little cards in old envelopes or in bundles loosely tied up with string, instead of in the boxes stationers sell for the purpose. This means that when they are dropped the maximum disorder results and some cards are bound to get lost. Lost cards often lead to surprising results, not merely wrong references, which everybody is used to, but the combination of incompatible information under one heading.

When the book is actually bound up and the author has got his advance copy he is always surprised to see how thin it is. During the war thinness was honourable and authors did not mind much, particularly as they knew so many other authors who had not been able to get their books printed at all, but now it is beginning to be a thing which surprises authors again.

Another thing which always surprises authors if it is their first book is a request to provide those flattering things that get said about books in publishers' catalogues. It does not occur to most people that these are not compliments paid to authors by others, but the author's own opinion. Modest authors often find it difficult to write these notes, which are called blurbs, but their backwardness will be easily cured by reading in old publishers' catalogues what their friends thought about *their* books.



"Well—if it isn't the hotel manager! We were just talking about you."



ANNALS OF A BRANCH LINE

XI—*The evening train arrives at Smugglers' Reach*



Palais de Danse

I SEE now that I need not have worried so much over what to wear; my efforts at protective colouring (I feared that at the Palais mere unobtrusiveness might be obtrusive) go unnoticed by the commissionaire and the matron in the pay-box, who give me no more attention than they do the stumpy young man in a beret and hacking-jacket or the two slim, dark girls in green who sway before me up the rich stair-carpet like a couple of black tulips. The commissionaire and the matron have no feelings about any of us.

Once inside, where the kaleidoscope of human particles shifts to the music's slow oozing (it is a waltz they are playing), I realize that a Maharajah in full splendour would pass unremarked, and even a dinner-jacket would be no embarrassment to its wearer beyond being occasionally mistaken for the manager's. There is a singleness of mind about your Palais-goer: he doesn't care what you wear—can you dance?



It is nearly nine o'clock, and the place is packed. An hour ago an observer in the table-dotted gallery would have looked down on a mere fifty couples devouring unnatural distances over the honey-coloured floor; now there is no floor to be seen, only a great tide of people; by nine o'clock the purchasing power of the pay-box half-crown has shrunk dangerously—two hours' paradise is worth the money, less would be uneconomical. And the rain falling in that remote world outside has driven in some

extra hundreds. Not only the dance-floor is crammed; under the subdued roof lights (the glowing wrought-iron wall-panels are ornamental rather than illuminative, and perhaps more atmospheric than either) the dancers are being keenly studied by the ranks of the disengaged who line the staircases, sit at the tables or stand six deep at the ends of the immense hall. The sexes tend to hang together, the men gathering in small, unspeaking groups,

sometimes running a comb slickly through their hair with a nervous, unconscious movement, or absently reassuring themselves as to the set of their (often startling) neckties; the girls stand or sit in pairs for the most part, perhaps drinking through a straw from small, innocuous bottles. (All drinks are soft at the Palais.) A handsome young woman with camera and flash-bulb moves among the tables offering to capture the occasion on celluloid for those who wish it; few do: they'll be here again to-morrow night, what would they want with a souvenir?

"*Though my world may go awry . . .*" bleats the singer—his face is chinless, his glasses rimless, his gestures impassioned; but no one pays any attention to his romantic troubles—and as the waltz retards suddenly to its syrupy close the tide of dancers is agitated in a thousand tiny whirlpools and then is still; expressionless faces



are turned to the band, and somewhere in the vast concourse a stranger to Palais convention starts to clap sharply but is instantly silenced, probably by a more sophisticated partner's pointing out that the musicians are well paid, and that energy expended in banging the hands together should properly be directed to the feet. The band plays a curt, dismissive figure, and the dancers at once disperse, as if an invisible hoop has been expanded from the arena's centre, pressing them evenly back until the great sheen of floor is empty. Most of the couples separate coolly and depart in opposing directions; one pair who have been exhibiting a dizzying skill in each other's arms (their costumes first caught my eye, the man in a short-sleeved yellow sweater with maroon borders, worn outside the trousers; the girl, bare legs, ankle-strap shoes and an off-the-shoulder model lately part of a barrage balloon) turn on their heels without a word and stride away as if about to fight a duel with pistols. Soon the yellow sweater is flickering among the distant tables, looking for a new girl. The approach is interesting: the men present themselves for a moment only, and the question is popped with an eyebrow, answered with a glance; rejections do not appear to abash, nor acceptances exhilarate; it is as impersonal as a preparatory-school dancing-class. Below me a youth with trouser-clips and an errand-boy quiff mutely accosts a girl in a tartan skirt and wedges; for answer she holds up an unlighted cigarette, and he, flicking a lighter stylishly, moves on alone.

The lull is soon over. The management advertise Continuous Dancing, and the customers would probably be very angry if they didn't get it. To achieve this, two bands, each of about a dozen musicians, divide the work between them, not by playing alternate numbers, which would mean both bands being on the stands at once, denied the solace of a drink and a smoke, but in relays of half an hour or so. The organization is smooth, in this as in everything else here, and as the band in the blue coats wring the last sob out of the waltz, the others (white shirts with full sleeves) are slipping into their places behind the light-oak music-desks of the second stand. Their appearance is completely unremarkable, and they might be Civil Servants, dental mechanics, lawyer's clerks; the leader, distinguished by a light-grey



jacket, is the last to appear; small, thoughtful, going bald, he might be a schoolmaster, and the fancy gains hold as he executes a few preliminary cuts at space with his baton—swish, swish . . .

. . . CRASH! At the third cut the hot buzz is riven and splintered with noise, the very building seems to quiver, the air to tremble in the steaming rhythm of a fast, high-pressure number. This is swing. This is the stuff that "sends" you. As the bank of brass opens its lungs and the coarse brilliance of the saxophones swirls upwards an influence almost tangible rushes out and seizes people by the legs; as if possessed of an independent life, a thousand shoes skim out on to the polished floor—ankle-straps, wedges, sandals, brogues, buckled suede, all together in the anything but Floral



dance. The music is remorseless, pulverizing. The leader of the band turns to the dancers, smiling faintly at the trick he has worked, and draws out the music with quick, low, scooping movements of the hands, as if skipping. Behind him the storm of sound rages with practised integration; the drummer decorates his thick, hard under-beat with a complex variation and exchanges a pleased grin with the bass-player. In no time at all the floor is full.

The management is inclined to frown on the advanced form of dancing known as jive, not from prudishness, but because it is static in the sense that it sticks to its own four square feet of floor and prevents the more formal dancers from circulating; the incurable jivers, therefore, often fight shy of the floor proper and select for their antics a spot behind the fringe of non-dancers at the ends of the room. Looking down, I see several such couples. A boy with fair hair waved upwards and backwards with the regularity of a flight of steps, is bouncing with grave animation on one foot, the other knee twirling lissomely behind him, while his partner, a tousled girl in a golf-jacket and calf-length electric-blue slacks neat with turn-ups and creases, spins to and from him as if on a wire. The boy's lips are pursed in an (almost certainly) soundless whistle of concentration; the girl's

eyes are closed; these are the only signs of enjoyment—or of any emotion—displayed by either. A bald man in a good City suit capers nearby, less accomplished but in the proper spirit, with a small, spectacled woman in sensible shoes. Six feet away the two black tulips are dancing together; their steps have a matching, bewildering intricacy, ankles crossing and twinkling, skirts flying, pale faces thrown back, forefingers upraised and wagging in a convention of this unexpectedly ritualized dance. Even on the floor itself many couples are performing a watered-down sort of jive, the men seeming to hurl their partners away from them and allow them to spin giddily before jerking them back again, but as far as the close-packed crowd permits they keep moving on.

The air seems hot and dry, but I realize that this is only imagination. It is the effect of seeing so much energy burned up. Now the band is in the final chorus: the music, "solid" (as the jivers say) from the start, has thickened and deepened to a grinding, repetitive-cumulative insistence; it is heady, drugging, with phrase stacked on phrase in a shining pillar of sound; the whole world is full of it. Then, when one bar more would be unbearable, yet one less tormenting, it is suddenly cut off on a high, triumphant discord. A cymbal sizzles briefly, and at once the dancers are still, jivers and all. They stand waiting in the hush. There is no applause.

"Souvenir photograph?" says a voice in my ear. "No. No thank you." This is something beyond photography. As I get up to go two girls in linen trousers come to my table; they have a bottle of orangeade with two straws. "Good, to-night," says one. The other, imbibing, nods.

The cloak-room man bids me an off-hand good night; the commissionaire and the matron, looking more detached than ever, don't bother. There is a muffled rattle and crash of South American rhythm as the swing-door puffs to behind me. It is still raining in the deserted street.

J. B. BOOTHROYD



Hedge-note on Sheepshanks

THE power of reasoned argument is what distinguishes man from the beasts. A chimpanzee, or for that matter an orang-utan, might with a little trouble be taught to trim a hedge. If you care to go further and say that an orang-utan that could not be taught to trim a hedge better than the present writer would be rejected by any menagerie-owner as a beast of subnormal intelligence I shall not dispute the proposition. But, in the absence of any such animal, I shall continue to trim this hedge, and to think beautiful thoughts.

When I took up these shears (they were sharp then, and light in the hand)

I began by thinking about hedges. I remembered the two hedgers in Rudyard Kipling's *Friendly Brook*; Jabez and Jesse, if memory does not mislead me. They used billhooks, of course, not blunt, ill-tempered, badly-designed shears weighing upwards of half a hundredweight. "I reckon she's about two rod thick," said Jabez (or it might have been Jesse), "and she hasn't felt iron since—how long?" "Call it fifteen year," replied Jesse (or possibly Jabez; the point is not material), "and you won't be far out." If the owner of that hedge was married I cannot understand how he had contrived to neglect it for so long, unless he was bedridden; even then his wife would probably have wheeled him out to the hedge in a bath-chair. Be that as it may, the hedge that confronted Jabez and Jesse was "not a hedge at all—just all

manner of trees." The description is apt.

Supposing I had a billhook, should I be able, with a few deft snicks, to reveal the true face of the hedge, and thereafter to transform it with unhurried effortless movements into a neat green wall with a flat top? Would not the more likely upshot of my manoeuvres be a bloodstained billhook and a freshly severed head bouncing down the garden path? That being the case, was there anything to be gained by further conjecture along these lines?

I began thinking about the curvature of space. It is difficult to think about space being curved, though not so difficult as to trim a hedge to an even height with a pair of shears designed by a mentally bankrupt tinker and fashioned apparently out of some alloy both softer and heavier than lead. The nearest I could get to a mental picture of curved space was an image of a long sheet of paper curved into a cylinder and at the same time twisted, so that the outer surface of the cylinder became the inner surface as you followed it around. You can do this for yourself if you have a sheet of paper handy. The curious thing is that the sheet so twisted has only one surface, whereas if you untwist it again it undoubtedly has two. What has happened to the other? And is it the top or the bottom surface that has disappeared?

I snipped off the projecting top of a young sycamore and reflected with satisfaction that I had succeeded in visualizing a two-dimensional space that was undoubtedly curved. As a result of the curvature its two boundaries, top and bottom, had merged into one. I wondered what would be the analogous result in the case of three-dimensional space being similarly twisted. I went on wondering for some minutes, stopping only when the piece of hedge at which I was snipping had got so low that it hurt my back to stoop down to it. Then I tried working the opposite way; thinking of one-dimensional space, that is. I found I got on quite well by considering one-dimensional space as a piece of rope—a dodge that none of the larger apes would ever have hit on. It was child's play to twist this piece of space about in my mind. I twisted it into a circle, and at once noticed that both its boundaries (its ends, that is to say) had disappeared. This annoyed me for a



"Well, if you've never seen a six-pound note before, how do you know that's not a genuine one?"

while because it did not seem to fit in with what had happened to the sheet of paper. It would have been logical for the twisting of the rope to have resulted in a rope with one end; but no amount of thought on my part would produce any such picture.

I consoled myself with the reflection that ropes were peculiar things. Take knots, for instance. Sir Arthur Eddington has stated that it would not be possible to tie a knot in any but a three-dimensional space. A running bowline, tied in four dimensions, would simply come apart in one's hand. So would a sheepshank. So would a clove-hitch. One of the following (I muttered to myself) is the name of a kind of knot used for tying together two Ordinary Seamen of unequal thicknesses:

Parson's Elbow
Running Sea-Cook
Bo's'n's Despair
Grecian Bend
Admiral's Folly
Grandsire Triple—

I discovered that I was three feet past the end of the hedge; standing in the middle of the public footpath, in fact, and snipping madly away at empty air. From across the road a man in a Panama hat and white flannel trousers was staring at me as if I were one of the larger apes.

With an oddly human cry I dropped the shears and ran on all fours into the house.

G. D. R. DAVIES



"I see the Hobsons are starting a family."

Letter Re Model

To The Kid Model Co.

DEAR SIRs,—I like your model. There are just one or two things you might improve. Where the bits of wood have to be cut out with a razor-blade on the guide lines, it might be as well to put a safety line also, as my dad was helping me to cut these when the blade slipped. This caused my dad to lose his head completely, and it is not very nice to listen to when he does that.

Another thing is the decorations on the sheets of sticky paper to be cut out and stuck. If these could be coloured on both sides it would save the bits getting turned over and mistaken for the bit of paper my dad puts the pin out of the glue tube down on while using the glue. Then he puts the glue tube down on another bit while looking for the bit with the pin on. As the white side of these bits is the sticky side, this would not happen at all if my dad could see they were

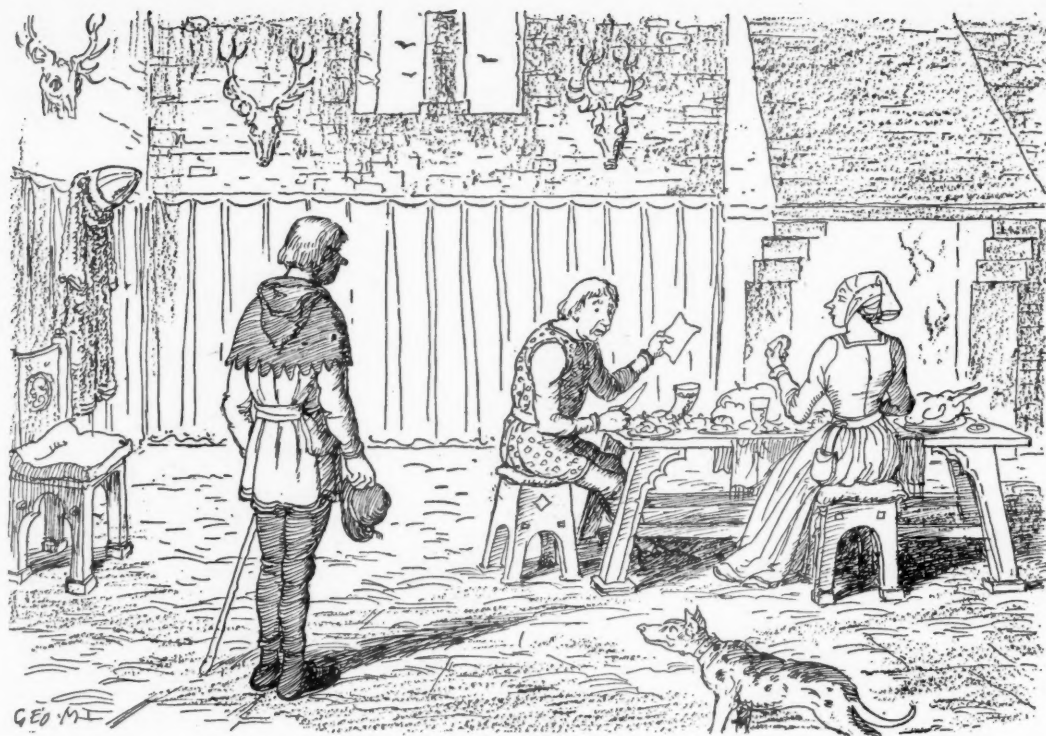
coloured bits that were wanted, as he would then put the glue pin down on the plan, and only have to look among the lines for it, being short-sighted since he took to the glasses fashion. I do not think this would work out very well either, because you ask people to pin the parts on the plan before glue is applied. If you gave us a lot of pins with fancy tops on for doing this, it would save us getting these pins mixed up with the one my dad is looking for, and getting pulled out before the glue is set. As they are stuck to the wood

with the glue, they pull the wood up when my dad makes a grab at them. The wood being laid on the plan, gets glue seeping through and causing adherence, so that when it pulls pieces out of the plan too it causes annoyance. By the time we have got as far as the sand-paper, so has the glue.

I think you could soon put these things right, and then your model would hold its own with any other model for glueing on the market.

Yours truly,

A. CHILD



"I've been dropped for the next Crusade."

The Flying German

WHAT has become of the train which, according to a report in *The Times* some days ago, has been lost by the railway authorities somewhere in the Russian zone of Germany between the western zones and Berlin?

Even *The Times*, which is a newspaper not ordinarily given to leaving loose ends, does not seem to be as deeply concerned with this problem as I hoped it would be. It announced baldly when the chaos on the railways between Berlin and the Western zones began that, on a certain day, nineteen (or whatever the number was) trains were proceeding slowly eastward; seven were stationary; and one had been lost completely. On subsequent days it was reported that twelve (as it were) trains were proceeding east and fifteen were stationary, that six were proceeding east and twenty-three were stationary, that one was proceeding east—one can imagine how slowly and carefully—and that thirty-seven were stationary; but never that the missing train had been found.

I ask with particular anxiety because several of the trains on the German railways belong to me. I took them over from various Railway Transport Officers with much signing of documents, initialling of standing orders, and even on one occasion an inspection of a rather surprised train guard, who had imagined that their duties began and ended with their presence on the train; and no one ever asked me to hand the trains back. I have acquired in this way three quite small trains that were in those days running between Bad Oeynhausen and Plön and a much bigger and more impressive one that went from Berlin to Bielefeld. I also own a train on the Egyptian State Railways, which was given to me by the R.T.O. at Cairo, but I suppose that when the Eighth Army left Egypt, all rights in Egyptian trains reverted to the Egyptians. It wasn't a very nice train, anyway; among other things it was completely deficient in electric-light bulbs.

Admittedly I never intended to press my claim to any of them, but I hate

to think of their being lost in this careless way. A train, after all, is not a collar-stud or a theatre ticket; it doesn't roll under a dressing-table or get left in the pocket of another suit. It doesn't even jump the rails and drive along bosky footpaths through the woods, or (except in the works of Conan Doyle) plunge down disused coal-mines without leaving a trace. In general, a train can be expected to move from its point of departure to its point of arrival along a course predetermined by the map of the permanent way.

Now it is fair to assume that all the trains dispatched from the western zones over the zone boundary are making for Berlin. After all, that is what they have been waiting to do since the blockade first began last summer, and they are not likely to change their minds as soon as they get into the Russian zone and head irresponsibly for Stettin or Dresden or Leipzig or Moscow. So if the Russians really wanted to find the missing train, all they would have to do would

be to send search-parties out, on those fascinating little trolleys, along all the lines west from Berlin until they came to a train corresponding with the description of the missing one.

It seems, however, that the Russians have not done this. Russians are notoriously unsusceptible to suggestions from the western powers, and it is not difficult to visualize Comrade Khupinkov, the Commissar of Interzonal Rail Traffic, leaning insolently back in his chair and meeting all inquiries with a shrug and a nonchalant murmur in Russian.

Do not think that I am accusing Comrade Khupinkov of having lost my train deliberately. An organization which is unable to run a train successfully along a few hundred miles of very unexciting single track between Helmsstedt and Berlin would hardly be capable of spiriting a train away altogether and keeping it hidden for what is now a period of several weeks. There is no doubt in my mind that this is the work of someone far higher than a mere provincial commissar. Either the Kremlin boys have done it because I am on their files as a crypto-Fascist; or, what is far more likely in my view, some supernatural force is responsible.

The two chief supernatural forces in Russia known to M.I.5 are Kostchei and Tchernobog. This is no place for an incursion into the dæmonology of the Soviet Union, and beyond remarking that Tchernobog lives in a house which is supported on chickens' feet (I couldn't resist slipping *that* in), I will leave their dossiers for a more pertinent occasion. Just now I can only say that if either of those devils—I use the term in its proper sense—has got hold of my train, I am sorry for the people in it.

Consider their feelings. The formalities at the boundary check-point are completed; British soldiers returning from leave stand apathetically in the corridors with rifles, in case the Eastern Terror manifests itself; and the passengers feel they can at last put their feet up on the opposite seat, resting the heel of the left shoe on the toe of the right, and the heel of the right on the three inches of vacant space between the bilious child and the commercial traveller from Oldenburg. Sleep comes; not deep, continuous sleep, it is true, but enough at least to shorten the tedious night journey to Berlin.

From time to time, in restless moments, they glance out of the window to check their progress. A station; where are they? Magdeburg. So much farther to go! Another

station; Brandenburg. Jolly good, nearly there. Potsdam next stop.

And then something goes wrong. The train rushes through another station that looks like Breslau. Surely . . . ? The passengers begin to sit up. In agonizing suspense they await the next station. It is München Hauptbahnhof!

Thoroughly alarmed, everyone crowds to the window. Hurting through the night at an unearthly speed, the train rushes crazily past station after station. Chemnitz . . . Osnabruck . . . Vienna . . . Hamburg-Altona . . . Victoria (the Brighton line) . . . Dresden . . . Łódź . . . Minsk . . . Pinsk . . . the terrifying progress goes on. A cry of fear is forced from every throat as twelve-inch letters announce that they are entering the station of HELL! But all is well, the phantom train thunders through; they have merely skipped across the water to Norway.

And so they go careering about the railways of Europe, like some dread

cross between the Flying Dutchman and the Flying Scotsman. In many a German home there will be sorrowing for lost loved ones; Courts of Inquiry will be held on the train guard after twenty-one days' clear absence and they will be posted as deserters; unfeeling commissars will dismiss the situation with a bleak Slav monosyllable and the Flying German will hurtle on, through Bonn, through Bad Rothenfelde, through Karlsruhe and Kiev and Kensington, for ever and ever and ever.

For I fear it will never stop unless Kostchei (or Tchernobog) wills it to; and clearly he could not even begin to think of that until *The Times* reports the train found again.

B. A. YOUNG

o o

Yes, but . . .

"The book is as full of sparkling wit, 'impossible' situations and clever sallies as the proverbial curate's egg."

Indian paper

o o

Whitsun Short Story

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

Our Ref : BIMcA/DRW

Your Ref :

26 May 1949

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

Our Ref : BIMcA/DRW

Your Ref :

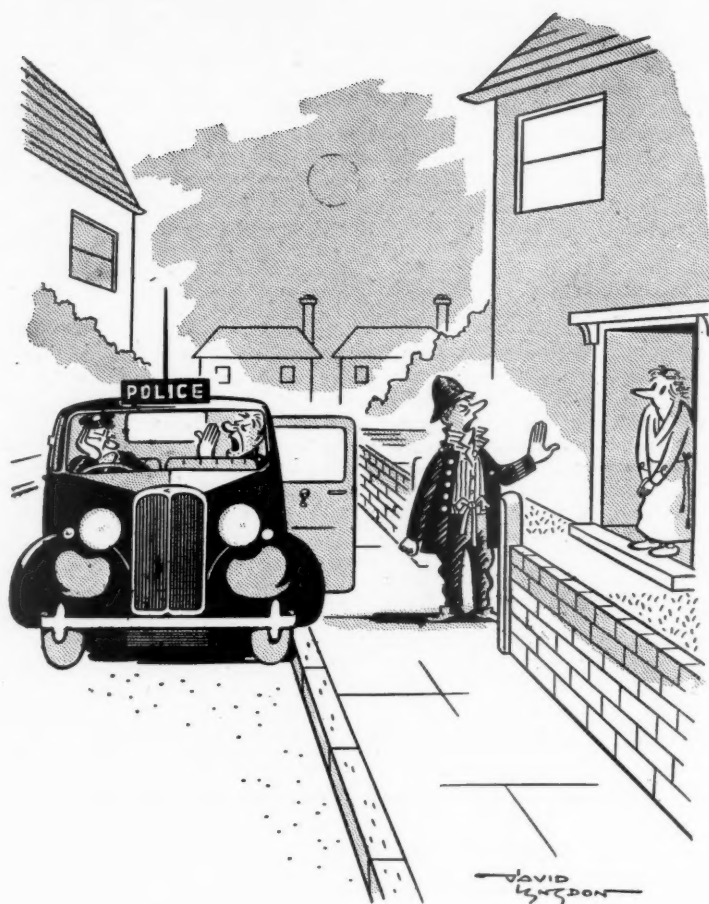
31 May 1949

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

Our Ref : BIMcA/DRMcA

Your Ref :

14 June 1949



"That's quite all right, madam. You heard a suspicious sound, so you dialled nine-nine-nine! You did your duty."

Squatters

I OBJECT," said Edith, "to books being kept in the larder. If you have more books than shelves, you should throw away some of the books."

I dismissed this nonsensical suggestion without comment. Everybody knows that if you throw away a book of any sort you regret it immediately afterwards, because if it is a reference book you find next day that you want to look up something that is not in any other book, and if it is a work of fiction somebody comes along soon afterwards and asks you if you have it and says he has been trying to get hold of a copy for years.

"It is your fault that the books have

overflowed into the larder," I said, "because you insisted on buying a new radiogram. The new radiogram is taller than the old radiogram, so there is room for only three shelves of books above it instead of four."

Edith refused to argue. She simply carried the nineteen books from the larder and put them on my desk, so that when I wanted to write I had to dump them on the floor. Then, as soon as I was out of the room, she put them back on the desk. It got quite monotonous. Then I noticed that two of the books were ones that I had borrowed from Sympson, and this gave me an inspiration.

"If I go carefully through all the

books on my shelves," I said, "I shall find at least nineteen books belonging to other people. By returning these to their owners I shall gladden their hearts and at the same time solve my literary housing problem."

As I weeded my way along the shelves it soon became clear that the target of nineteen books that I had set myself was extremely modest. On the top shelf I found three volumes which I appeared to have inadvertently stolen from my school library thirty years ago. These I packed up and posted off. Then I struck a rich vein of detective stories borrowed at various times from the vicar, an Italian dictionary in two fat volumes belonging to Johnson-Clitheroe, seventeen odd volumes with Sympson's rather ornate book-plate inside the cover, and five books on military strategy that had been lent to me against my will by Brigadier Hogg.

The spaces left by all these squatters not only absorbed my entire surplus, but left a little shelf empty, and I set off with a light heart to return the piles of books to their various owners. They all seemed pleased to get their property back, and thanked me.

"Not at all," I said. "There are few more disreputable characters than the book-filcher, and I make it a rule to go through my library at regular intervals to weed out any books that I may by some mischance have failed to return to their owners. It is only common honesty to do so."

Having disposed of all my parcels I popped into the second-hand shop in the High Street and bought a six-volume Gardeners' Dictionary which had been tempting me for a long time. It would just fill, I estimated, the little empty shelf.

Edith was in a most disagreeable mood when she opened the door to me, and when I entered the sitting-room and saw the mountain of books I guessed why. All afternoon she had been answering the door to a stream of callers. The vicar had returned seventeen of my books, Sympson thirty-seven, Johnson-Clitheroe nine, and Brigadier Hogg six.

D. H. BARBER

Irreparable

A STINGY old lady from Ireland
Sent her Sunday shoes to the repaire-
land;

When he found that the soles
Contained fifty-six holes
He returned them at once by the
bireland.

At the Play

Love in Albania (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)—*Spanish Rhapsody* (SAVOY)

IT has always been impossible not to believe that a good play by Mr. ERIC LINKLATER was somewhere just round the corner. With his gifts for character and dialogue he appeared to have everything needed except the ability to discipline his overflowing imagination to the pint-pot of the stage. We have waited, confidently, a long time, and now at last we can report progress. *Love in Albania*, fresh from the Bath Festival, may not, strictly speaking, be a good play, it may be wild and somewhat irregular, but who in his senses could wish to speak strictly about an entertainment so stimulating and amusing, that has enough originality for a dozen trim West End comedies and is recognizably out of the same stable as *Private Angelo* and those earlier riots of Rabelaisian philosophy?

Considering the clash of personalities Mr. LINKLATER has contrived, the piece is remarkably orderly, for he allows a bumbling modern poet, who has brought best-selling erotics out of his activities with the underground in Albania, to be followed into a private flat late at night (during a blitz in 1944) by an American military policeman who connects him with the disappearance of a long-lost guerrilla daughter. The poet is interested in a highly academic way in his hostess, a nice honest girl beginning to tire of the pettiness of her pompous husband, who proves a most unwilling host.

Attired in white spats and snowdrop hat, the policeman enters through the window, having first screwed up the hall door from the outside to make certain of the poet. Released from prison to do battle for democracy, he is a great tousled gum-chewing bozo, gently ferocious and ferociously gentle, who seems to have come straight from the Mappin Terraces. Also he has a gun, and for a long time things look pretty ugly for the poet. At length, after a lot of admirably funny discussion, the latter admits that the policeman's daughter spurned him so cruelly he had been obliged to shoot her; but far from this angering her father, he is suddenly enchanted to recall that he had had to shoot his own

wife for the very same reason, and he and the poet then split a bottle of whisky in the best Linklater manner. The remaining differences between the men being settled, to the relief of the



[*Love in Albania*]

In Memoriam

Sergeant Dohda—MR. PETER USTINOV; Will Ramillies—MR. PETER JONES
Susan Lawn—MISS BRENDA BRUCE; Robert Lawn—MR. ROBIN BAILEY

hostess, by a discovery of common duodenal suffering, the policeman, who has been a professional strike-breaker, goes off very drunk to help a lady with her refractory alligator, under the impression that her trouble is an agitator.

He is a magnificently comic character, a sentimental ape whose toughness is shot through with a pathetic longing for human warmth, and Mr. PETER USTINOV, looking entirely unlike

any of the Mr. USTINOVs we have seen before, plays him marvellously down to the husky accent of Sing-Sing and the insensate flick of the gum across the mouth. It is a wonderful performance that never for a moment lets up. Miss BRENDA BRUCE is delightful as the lady, Mr. PETER JONES finds plenty of satire in the poet, Mr. ROBIN BAILEY makes the most of the husband, who is rather flatly drawn, and Miss MOLLY URQUHART oils the works maternally with the sturdiest common sense. The play is wittily directed by yet another Mr. USTINOV, and if it doesn't move into London it will be time to leave some dynamite in Shaftesbury Avenue.

Don't miss *Spanish Rhapsody*, an exciting evening of traditional peasant dancing and music by a young company as talented as they are refreshingly unspoilt. Whether their stuff is absolutely authentic, without any tincture of cabaret, I can't tell you, but it doesn't seem to me to matter in the least beside

their great accomplishment and the beautiful simplicity with which their show is put on. Many of the rhythms are staccato, and complicated arrangements of clapping and stamping play an important part. Castanets chirp like crickets and crack like machine-guns, and much of the dancing has a fierce urgency that suggests the pawing of mustangs. Moorish influence is evident. (The men wear black boots, which a little suggest hooves.) ANA ESMERALDA, who dances splendidly and whose miming has considerable tragic force as well as comic subtlety, leads the company—in lovely peasant finery, as they all are. With her is JOSELE, a small Pan-like figure supercharged with electricity, and DAVID MORENO, who plays the guitar like an angel. ERIC KEOWN

Recommended

THE HEIRESS—*Haymarket*—From Henry James's story, very well staged.

BLACK CHIFFON—*Westminster*—Flora Robson superb in good family drama.

THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING—*Globe*—Witty comedy by a poet.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM—*Phoenix*—Late Restoration brilliance.

TRAVELLER'S JOY—*Criterion*—Yvonne Arnaud penniless abroad.

*THE HAPPIEST DAYS OF YOUR LIFE—*Apollo*—Wild school farce.

(*Suitable for young people)



[*Spanish Rhapsody*]

Spanish Whirlwind
ANA ESMERALDA

At the Opera

Der Ring des Nibelungen—Tristan und Isolde (COVENT GARDEN)

NOW that the nightmare spectacle of Germanism militant has ceased to occupy the centre of the world stage we are able to accept without protest the whole Wagnerian cosmogony of giants, gods, dwarfs, monsters, heroes and lovers and once again to take in our stride the outrageous philosophies they express without more than a passing thought of what we know they mean in practice. We were content for our senses to be in Wagner's thrall as the musical image of the curse-laden *Ring* floated impalpably through the air like a wisp of poisoned vapour; as *Wotan's* spear stretched its majestic shaft of notes across the score; as *Valhalla* reared its skiey turrets in measured chords of ethereal masonry; as *Nothung* flashed, the *Rheingold* gleamed, and the *Valkyries'* wild shouts echoed across the sky. We could sympathize with *Wotan* as he expounded the philosophy of *Weltmacht* oder *Niedergang* in his dialogue with *Erda* (still looking as she did last year, like a peculiarly indigestible green turnip). And, after *Valhalla* and with it the rule of the gods had vanished in sound and flame, we came back to hear *Tristan und Isolde* and to be convinced that for lovers death is the only refuge.

Wagner can, in fact, make us believe anything, for the space of one long evening at any rate, particularly if he speaks with the voice of such an artist as KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD. She is the ideal Wagnerian heroine. Wagner's characters, whether they be men or gods, are of superhuman proportions; but it is given to few artists to rise to their god-like stature. FLAGSTAD is one of these few. She is radiant with the radiance of a complete and serenely-balanced personality. She has, too, the supreme gift of repose, a repose more eloquent than any movement, and the gestures of her arms are beautiful beyond description. Her movements sing as nobly as her voice. To see her as *Brünnhilde* awakening from her long fire-encircled sleep and greeting the



new day with majestic movements of her arms is something not easily to be forgotten; and as the realization comes to her that in order to respond to the passion of *Siegfried* she must shed her divinity like a cloak and become a woman we hold our breath to watch this wonderful transformation.

This is perhaps her greatest performance; even the glory of her singing of *Isolde's* "Liebestod" cannot surpass it.

These performances of *Der Ring* surpass anything that Covent Garden has achieved since the war. All of them were good, and *Götterdämmerung* was first rate. It was all the more disappointing that *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* of the second cycle should have been deprived of the superb *Wotan* of Hans Hotter, who, unfortunately,

contracted hay fever.

His place was taken by a singer sent for in haste from the New York Metropolitan, who was unequal to this handicap. His farewell to *Brünnhilde* was perfunctory, and when his spear, and with it the authority of the gods, was splintered by *Siegfried* he gathered up the pieces as if they were so many cigarette

ends. To counterbalance this disappointment, our respect for SET SVAN-
HOLM grew with each performance. This artist has been endowed by Nature with wonderful good looks but with a voice of only mediocre quality. He overcomes this deficiency, however, by sheer musicality and stagecraft and by the boundless enthusiasm with which he throws himself into every rôle he plays. He sang the

rôles of *Siegfried*, *Sigmund*, *Loge* and *Tristan*, and rose to his greatest heights in the last act of *Tristan*. He depicted so vividly the burning fever and the longing that tortured the dying hero that one's tongue fairly clave to the roof of one's mouth. His *Siegfried* was faithfully modelled on Wagner's description of this rather bat-brained character—"the human being in the most natural and gayest fullness of his physical manifestation," as the translator puts it. His *Sigmund* was excellent; and though his *Loge* looked like a Merry Andrew from a fair

and hopped gawkily about like a cat on hot bricks, this was less his fault than the producer's. PETER MARKWORT's *Mime* was a telling picture of greed, terror and futility, but GRAHAME CLIFFORD, excellent actor though he is, has not a good enough voice for *Alberich* and turned the character into too much of a grotesque. The *Hagen* of DEZSOE ERNSTER

was a truly monumental personification of evil and a very fine performance. The *Fricka* and *Waltraute* of EDITH COATES were excellent from the vocal point of view, though less good from the histrionic.

The various fauna with which *Der Ring* abounds acquitted themselves with credit. *Siegfried's* bird sang very nicely. The *Rhinemaidens* swam beautifully; they had tails and dorsal fins and darted about minnow-like in a way that made us feel more than a little queasy. They never ceased, however, to be melodious, playful and apparently unconcerned. *Alberich* turned himself with the aid of the Tarnhelm into a rather jerky blue snake; our old friend *Fafner*

the dragon blew smoke and clashed his jaws gallantly; and *Brünnhilde's* horse *Grüne* mercifully decided not to appear in person. The orchestra, under Dr. RANKL, was at times astonishingly good and at others equally astonishingly not. The chorus of *Gibichungs* in *Götterdämmerung* was magnificent. D. C. B.



Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Record and Reflection

THE Journals of writers are nearly always enjoyable, even if sometimes they dope the reader until he lives a fantasy life in which he mixes with the famous and reads and thinks by proxy: the popularity of James Agate's "Ego" series was partly due to the opportunities it gave for this kind of identification. For volume after volume one sat wittily in the Café Royal or quoted, verbatim, books of which one had never previously heard. There is a danger implicit here that in a reaction against the gossipy Journal the value of some autobiographical element may be overlooked. For example, Mr. Wrey Gardiner, in *The Flowering Moment*, comments on M. André Gide, "It is odd to notice in his journal the uninteresting pieces mostly about books or his work, and the wonderful bits of illuminated insight."

It is true that the greatest interest of M. Gide's *Journals* (the last volume, 1928-39, has just appeared in Mr. Justin O'Brien's admirable translation) is to watch an endless, obstinate search for truth and to follow the movement of a great man's mind; yet any record of inner life loses something if it is not framed in the record of an outer life, as St. Augustine's "Confessions" lose force and coherence when the autobiographical thread is dropped and they cease to be a moving account of a spiritual pilgrimage without becoming a successful theological treatise.

Most men's thought is influenced by their circumstances and cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of them. M. Gide is part of the history of our times and the history of our times provides some of the subject and more of the quality of his thought. To omit his contacts with other writers, his travels and his life on his Normandy farm would emasculate the *Journals* as a psychological document, and the "wonderful bits of illuminated insight" would seem less wonderful. Here is a picture of a man in the round, one of the most complete pictures of an artist there have ever been. Its richness and variety are part of its fascination and each subject it contains gains from juxtaposition with other aspects of experience.

Readers to whom M. Gide is more important as a novelist and stylist than as a thinker will perhaps enjoy most the discussions on French prose and the continual testing and re-ordering of themes. Suggestions are casually dropped which years later flower into books; one sees the whole process from the external stimulus to the reviews.

Mr. Wrey Gardiner does not give much space to mundane experience. His journal is mainly, but not exclusively, a series of reflections and prose poems. It loses by this lack of external reference, to which much of the puzzling variation of quality may be due. Passages of delicate and vivid writing are mingled with outbursts of maudlin self-pity, pompous, very old-fashioned abuse of the world he lives in and "Deep Thoughts" which sound as if they come from a school magazine or from Sir Owen Seaman's parody of Marie Corelli.

There is pessimism, division of mind, paralysis of will, violent oscillation of confidence and despair in M. Gide; but his genius uses even his weaknesses creatively. His mental sufferings are given universality by the perfection with which they are described and the ironic detachment with which, when they have passed, they are analysed. Mr. Wrey Gardiner far too often just whimpers, or reports some trivial annoyance not for its inherent interest but because it concerns him. He is the kind of man who does not say, "It is cold" but "It makes me cold." Mr. Connolly's "The Unquiet Grave," which seems to have

influenced him, is bracing despite its self-pity because of its elaborate structure and the hard clarity of its writing; there is nothing invertebrate or slapdash about it.

What makes *The Flowering Moment* so instructively infuriating is the waste of Mr. Wrey Gardiner's obvious gifts. He is a genuine poet. He has an interesting background and an individual flavour. He is a valuable publisher and is clearly not a fool, though he sometimes makes himself sound like one—"The concentration required of the artist is enormous and terrible. Triviality and platitude will not do," or "Vision lies like a humble parasite beneath the stone of the ecstatic hour." He would probably have discriminated between his inspirations with more commonsense, a quality in which good artists are usually rich, if his Journal had had an earthier foundation of men, places, work and play.

The attraction of the Journal form for the lazy or fragmentary writer is that he can say what he likes and at any length he likes. He can even throw in detached metaphors or the first lines of poems. But anarchy does not make literature. Gradually the bright ideas will shine less brightly and the sprints become shorter and more breathless. When M. Gide argues that liberty depends on discipline he is elucidating the conditions in which the Journal can become an art form.

R. G. G. PRICE



Arabian Enigmas

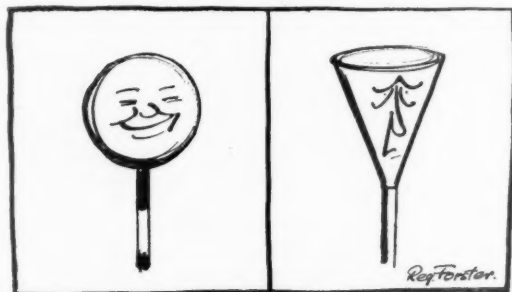
The deserts of Iraq, Syria, and Persia—which, fortunately, have defied the modern journalist with his three-week visa—are perhaps the hardest terrain for any serious writer to enter; many have tried, but, owing to their national prejudices and educations, most have failed to understand, or even adequately to present, the Arabian way of life. In *Three Years in the Levant*, however, Mr. Richard Pearse has transposed himself from his English world into an oriental one extremely successfully: through a series of rapid sketches—from his first arrival in Aleppo to his journeys on “secret missions” across the desert as far as the Turkish border—he builds up an intelligent, detached, and living picture of the Levant. Whether he is discussing the farcical British propaganda, or Hitler's strange prestige (the Turks thought that he caused earthquakes in their country because of his displeasure), or the activities of the Jews, or how to interrogate a trainload of international travellers on the Taurus express, or the fatalistic viewpoint of the Arabs, or their entirely different scale of values, which is the most difficult of all to understand, or the essentially oriental nature of Christianity, the author is always shrewdly fair. The result is a lively book which should help to prepare the traveller, before he leaves his home port, by disillusioning him without the pain of having to experience the actual process at first hand.

R. K.

Invisible Industry

The Highlands have suffered some notable invasions, and perhaps none worse than the irruption of the sprite-seekers and the worshippers of Celtic custom. In his latest novel, *Hunting the Fairies*, Mr. Compton Mackenzie suggests that though the going has been hard the hunt has not been unprofitable. This adroit piece of satire describes the plight of a kindly bachelor laird on whom relations dump a Bostonian high priestess of Celtic culture, armed with scientific aids and touchingly credulous, and accompanied by a fetching daughter; and the feverish race after the little people that develops with the arrival of a second dynamic huntress from Boston. The laird and his friends are grand fellows, believing implicitly in the Loch Ness Monster, but proving extremely hazy on the sources of the “Mary Rose” school of thought. The characters in this quick-moving comedy seem lifelike, from the chieftain who flings the pawns about his hall when he plays chess because they remind him of hikers, to the ancient poacher whose far-famed summoning of pixies hinges intimately on the disappearance of six bottles of whisky. Mr. Mackenzie with his tongue in his cheek is great fun.

E. O. D. K.



Harvest of Timber

It is a far cry from the American Sunday paper, using, one is told, eighty acres of timber, to the economical and expert fashion in which our forefathers conducted their forests. Mr. H. L. Edlin, surveying all the *Woodland Crafts in Britain* that exist or recently existed, maintains that even those landlords who felled trees to smelt iron or build ships were so concerned to replant in kind that their forests exist to this day. But the business of this book is not forestry. Still less is it the work of the engineer, the chemist or the wood technician. It ignores the cabinet-maker and sculptor to tell the whole story of the useful, and incidentally beautiful, things craftsmen make of wood: a trug for the garden, a crib for feeding sheep, a shingled roof, a coracle, a windmill, a cider-cask, a cricket-bat, a coffin. A whole winter night's entertainment awaits the family challenged to assign each craft to its tree—let alone to assign to each particular end its traditional process. Some crafts are thriving; some, alas, are not. But almost every photograph of the stalwarts depicted here shows an artist at work on a task after his own heart.

H. P. E.

Piebald Idyll

Kurumba is an island in the Indian Ocean, and though that is not its real name, it will no doubt be easily recognized by anyone familiar with those parts. For Sir John Heygate has described its scenery and inhabitants, and even the processes of its industries, with a curious and evocative exactitude. He takes us, so to speak, on a miscondacted tour of its length and breadth. Corporal Stevens, who has been stationed nearly four years on the island, where the war has become little more than a rumour, elects to spend what will probably be his last leave in the company of a native girl, in a combination of love-making and sight-seeing. The dusky Mohrin is as charming (if as hard-boiled) as a kitten, and Stevens, already under the island's drowsy spell, is tempted to turn what has been planned as a brief pleasure-trip into a lifetime of Arcadian domesticity. That dream is dispelled, and a placid, amusing, rather attractive story comes to its deliberately unexpected anticlimax; leaving one with a mild curiosity as to what will be Stevens's reactions to Chelsea and a dimly-remembered wife.

F. B.

Books Reviewed Above

- The Journals of André Gide*. Vol. III: 1928–1939. Translated by Justin O'Brien. (Secker & Warburg, 30/-)
The Flowering Moment. Wrey Gardiner. (Grey Walls Press, 7/6)
Three Years in the Levant. Richard Pearse. (Macmillan, 12/6)
Hunting the Fairies. Compton Mackenzie. (Chatto & Windus, 10/6)
Woodland Crafts in Britain. H. L. Edlin. (Batsford, 15/-)
Kurumba. Sir John Heygate. (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 9/-)

Other Recommended Books

- Flowers of the Field*. Rev. C. A. Johns. (Routledge, 16/-) The classic work of reference on British botany, revised throughout (keys added, nomenclature brought up to date) and edited by R. A. Blakelock. 266 coloured illustrations by E. N. Gwatkin, 245 figures in the text.
Malta: An Account and an Appreciation. Sir Harry Luke. (Harrap, 15/-) Entertainingly written, profusely illustrated book by former (1930–1938) Lieut.-Governor of the island; much historical stuff interwoven with personal reminiscence.
The Cottage in the Forest. Hugh Farnham. (Hutchinson, 12/6) Life in a remote cottage in East Anglia. Fifty photographs (birds, trees, flowers, landscapes) by Eric Hosking and others, and many decorative drawings by Edward Bradbury.

Hereward's Last Game

MY brother-in-law Hereward's game of golf has always been noted, if at all, for its power rather than its accuracy. Judge of our surprise, therefore, when we learned that he was billed to appear against the great Torquil MacThundringhoe in some competition or other. The MacThundringhoe is a scratch player, while Hereward likes to be offered bisques, but somehow or other he did not seem to be downhearted at his prospects.

"Do you realize," we pointed out to him, "that you are pitted against a man who doesn't know what it is to go round a golf course in more than ninety?"

"None the less," said Hereward, "I am not unconfident."

"You have been studying the works of Stephen Potter?" Theodore inquired. "You hope to beat him by sheer gamesmanship?"

"No," said Hereward. "Rather by flukesmanship, if the word is permissible. I am in good fluking form just now."

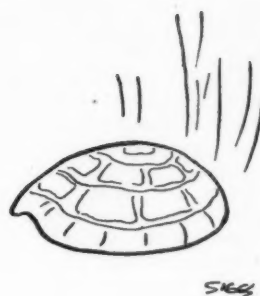
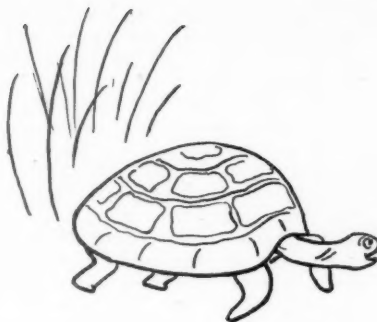
Having said this he was silent and did not refer to the subject again until we were all collected at the first tee. (He was in submarines during the war and practically never speaks.)

The first hole was a straightforward affair of four hundred and fifty yards, and Torquil MacThundringhoe beat his ball straight and far. So, to the general surprise, did Hereward. Nor was this a mere flash in the pan, for he kept it up and was on the green in two. They both were. The two balls lay side by side, with Hereward's three quarters of an inch from the hole and the other a foot or so away. As Hereward approached his ball there occurred a thing of which one rarely hears. A wormcast was cast by a worm exactly where it was needed to tip the ball over into the hole.

"One up," said Theodore, Auguste, Alexandrina, Gloriana and I, simultaneously.

The second was a very short hole indeed and Hereward played an air-shot, striking his true form thus early in the round. His opponent laid his ball dead with a mashie-niblick. Hereward then took a mashie-niblick also (returning his driver to his caddie) and struck the ball—or so it seemed to us—rather sooner than he had intended. However, it went into the hole and the MacThundringhoe missed his putt.

"Two up," we gasped.



"That you, dear?"

Torquil MacT. said something to his caddie, but nobody heard what it was.

Some spectators, keen to see some interesting golf, joined us as we went to the third. This was a dog-legged hole of six hundred yards, and Hereward's drive left his ball at the desired spot, nicely placed to be propelled towards the green with a brassie. His opponent, reciting some Gaelic rune under his breath, then took the tee and struck his ball rather too fiercely, so that it pitched exactly on Hereward's. Hereward's ball was thus driven halfway to the hole, while the MacThundringhoe's shot off the fairway and became wedged tightly in the fork of a small birch tree, about seven feet from the ground. To play his second he had to send for a hammer and Hereward won the hole quite easily.

"My honour, I think," he observed with an air of quiet confidence as we drew lots for the honour of teeing up his repaint for him at the fourth.

The MacThundringhoe and his caddie, somewhat aloof, muttered together with the air of a chieftain and a loyal clansman planning a massacre.

By skilful exploitation of the reflecting properties of a roller at the edge of the rough, Hereward was perched up on a crag overlooking the green, in three, while his opponent, having played the like, leaned negligently on his claymore, or putter, beside the pin. As Hereward stood gnawing his niblick in uncertainty the moment was tense, for the initiative seemed to be passing from him.

"Courage!" cried Auguste, fearing that his brother-in-law was losing his nerve.

Hereward handed back the niblick and took his putter instead. The

important thing now was not to hit the ball too hard, for it would run rather than pitch. and among the crowd there was some critical discussion of his choice of weapons. As it turned out he played an interesting little fozzle and the ball hit a rocky pinnacle just below the grassy ledge on which he stood and jinked off at approximately a right-angle from the true course to the hole. The MacThundringhoe permitted himself what passes among Scottish golfers for a smile.

It was the last time he smiled that day, for Hereward's devoted ball fell on his opponent's caddie, who had no time to get out of the way and therefore forfeited the hole on behalf of his employer. His employer, having played the first four holes in two under fours and lost them all, wore the dazed, incredulous expression of one who after all finds himself on the wrong side at Glencoe, while the discredited clansman did his best to lurk invisibly behind Theodore and Alexandrina. After a moment of pregnant silence the chieftain turned on his heel, heedlessly damaging the surface of the green, uttered a cry of "Heuch!" and strode with the purposeful, swinging stride of the Highlander towards the club-house.

"You win by four and fourteen," said Auguste admiringly. "Probably the most decisive win in the annals of golf. Who do you play in the next round?"

"The next round?" said Hereward. "I shall never play another hole. I now retire at my zenith and my caddie may have my clubs."

So now, having unexpectedly acquired four golf-clubs and a ball, and inspired by Hereward's play, I am taking up the game myself.

It'll Be All Over the Village by Noon

ALTHOUGH I am well aware that to come right out with it in plain English will lose me innumerable friends, I must say that Alsations are the most stupid dogs and might well be abolished. Even the fact that they originated in Alsace does not impress me sufficiently to stay my pen.

Until a few weeks ago, when I acquired a motor-cycle and arranged to garage it at the White Hart for two-and-sixpence a week, I held no strong views on Alsations either way. They were just big dogs. I suppose I must have encountered the brutes at various times—I may conceivably have patted one or two on the head in people's halls and drives—but I can honestly say that they had never cost me a moment's thought or trouble. Now they look like costing me my good name in the village.

The proprietor of the White Hart keeps an Alsatian. It is a large lantern-jawed creature with green eyes and a wet mouth. Mr. Hines calls it "playful." Its playfulness consists in tearing from its kennel with teeth bared and eyes alight whenever I walk through the yard of the White Hart to pick up my motor-cycle. So far I have always managed to reach the machine before the brute has been able to drive its fangs into my throat, and once astride the machine I am relatively safe. It all depends on the speed with which I can coax the two-stroke engine into action, for the noise of the engine terrifies the animal and sends it scampering back to its lair.

Unfortunately, the machine does not always spring to life immediately. More often than not I have to lunge at least a dozen times at the kick-starter before the thing breaks into its comforting roar, and this means that I am at the brute's mercy for at least half a minute, with my right leg seldom more than an inch or two from its slobbering jaws.

To-day we had a particularly cold early-morning snap and the motor-bike proved even more troublesome than usual. After two minutes of frantic kicking I was in such a state that I was ready to toy with the idea of throwing myself to the creature as Grizelda's husband threw himself from the sleigh to the wolves. Then, as my fear rose to a shameless panic, I suddenly found myself imitating the roar of the engine. "Brrrrr, brrrrr," I growled, kicking wildly at the foot-rest.

The expected wrenching shaft of pain in my right leg did not come.

"Brrrrr, brrrrr," I said.

I dared to look round for the first time, and the beast was not in sight. I found the kick-pedal again and lashed out. Then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw the thing emerge cautiously from its kennel.

"Brrrrr, brrrrr," I said, and it leapt back under cover.

"Brrrrr, brrrrr," I said, stooping to tickle the carburettor.

As I straightened up a pale round object just above the wall caught my attention. I looked and saw that it

was the face of Mr. Collinge the grocer. I nodded.

"Brrrrr, brrrrr," I said.

Mr. Collinge looked very worried, I thought. I was about to ask after his health when I realized that I could not afford to break my recital.

"Brrrrr, brrrrr," I said.

Mr. Collinge shook his head slowly, and a flush of humiliating comprehension rose to my neck and cheeks. Mr. Collinge was worried *about me*.

There was only one thing to do. I tried to give my growling some kind of form, some semblance of sanity. I growled to the tune of "My Mother's Eyes." It isn't easy to growl a melody (try it when next you gargle in the bathroom) and at the same time to give a fairly convincing imitation of a two-stroke engine. The opportunity for dual persuasion is extremely slight. In this case I found, after a few bars, that I was devoting too much effort to the tune and not enough to the growl, with the result that the Alsatian once more reappeared. It got to within four yards of me before I went back to my monotone—"Brrrrr, brrrrr." Immediately it turned and fled.

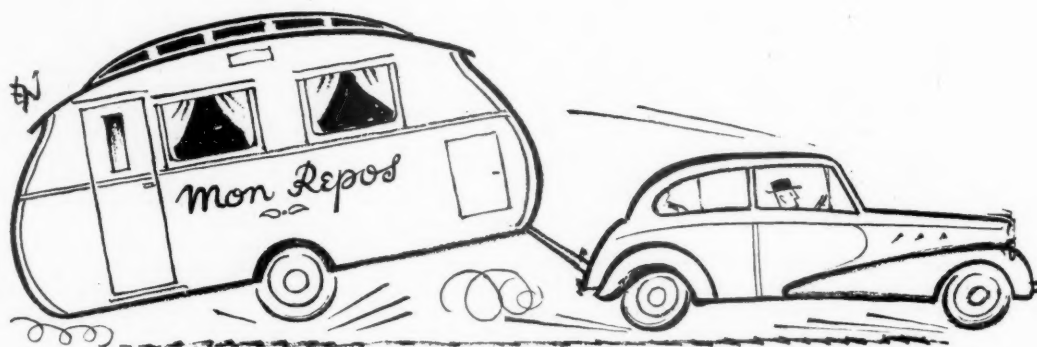
At last the kick-start pedal began to resist my thrusts and I redoubled my efforts.

"Brrrrr, brrrrr," I said.

The engine roared into life and I shot away.

Collinge was still shaking his head when I passed him two minutes later in Womersh Road. It will be all over the village by noon.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD




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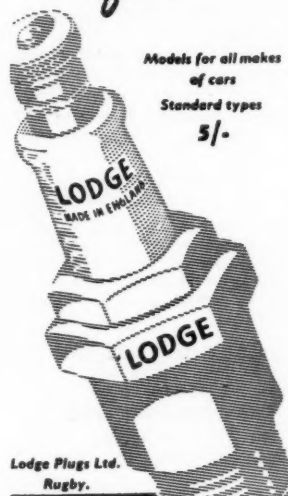
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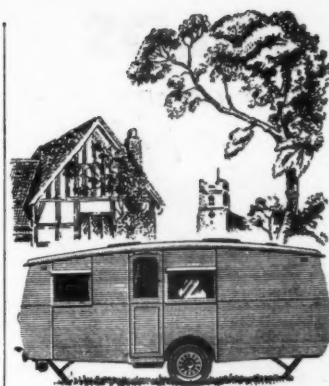
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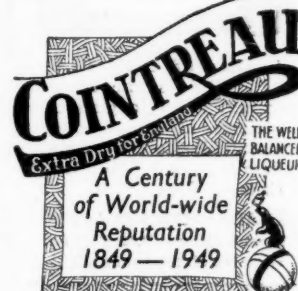


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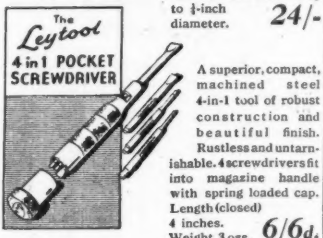
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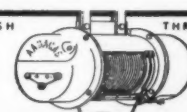
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No.

Can you drink it?

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Is it made in any particular county?

Yes.

Is it made in Devon?

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Is it Devonshire Cream?

No.

Is it nice and sweet?

Yes.

It's cyder!

Yes.

Let's have a recap. It's made in Devon, it's nice and sweet and it's cyder...

Yes.

Then it must be

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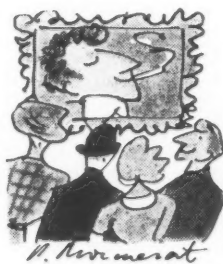
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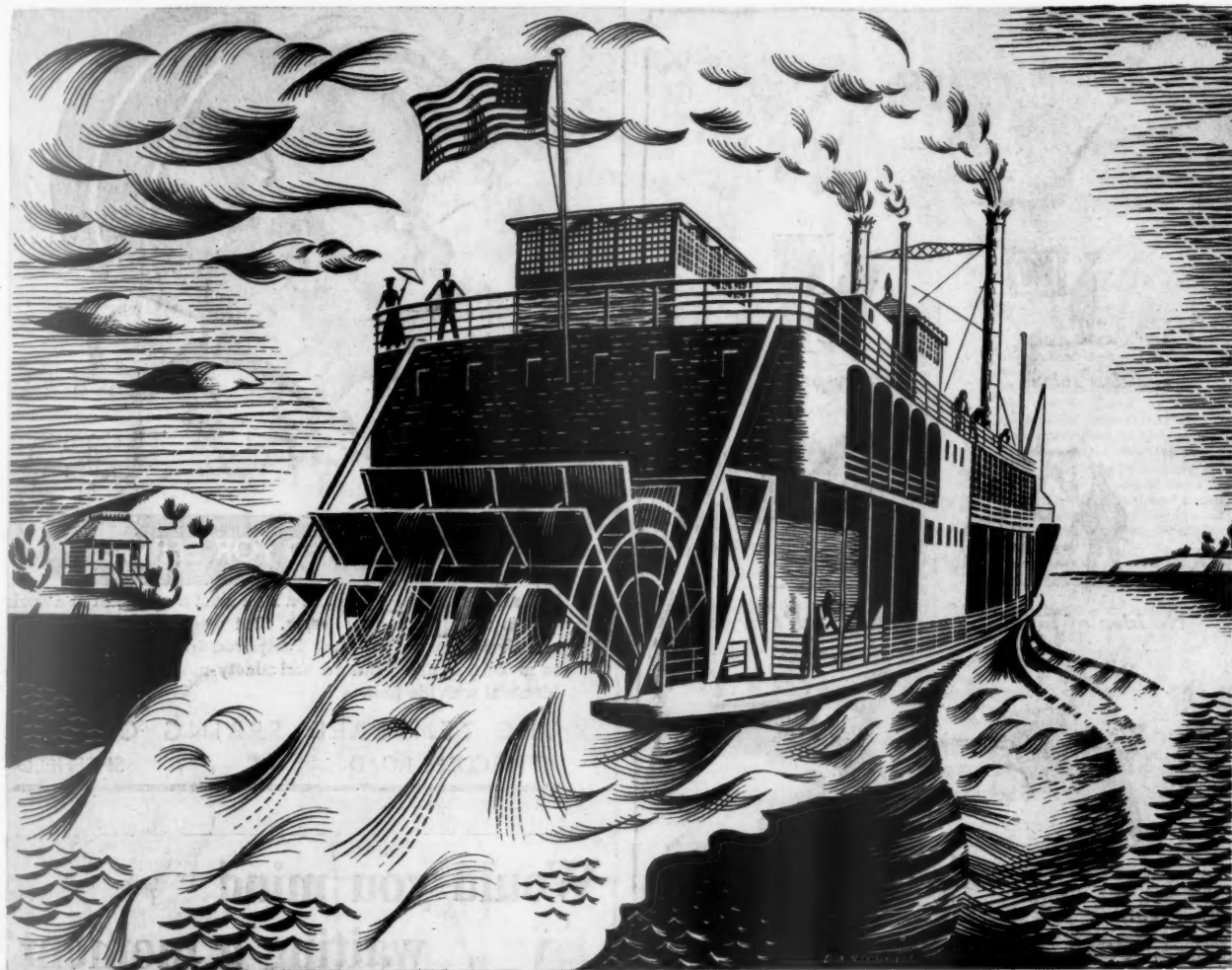
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